

CREATING MATERIAL WORLDS

THE USES OF IDENTITY
IN ARCHAEOLOGY

EDITED BY
Elizabeth Pierce
Anthony Russell
Adrián Maldonado
and Louisa Campbell



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Preface

Like many archaeology projects, the genesis of *Creating Material Worlds* can be found in the pub. Throughout years of seminars, papers and conference presentations, postgraduates in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Glasgow found themselves repeatedly using various forms of identity theory in their work regardless of time period or geographic area, proving those categories to be artificial restrictions in the study of past human interactions. We felt that the resulting theoretical cohesion emerging in our work was a strength to be played upon, and eventually *Creating Material Worlds* was born.

Many of the contributors to the volume have crossed academic paths in the past, but some have more recently entered the discussion. What unites us is our clear explanation and application of theoretical concepts to archaeological data sets in the belief that, despite the ever-changing nature of identity, we can begin to understand not just the basic elements of people's everyday lives but how they perceived themselves and the world around them. From the Iroquois burial practices of northern North America to the far reaches of the Classical world, and from the flint scatters of Mesolithic Scotland to the edge of the known world in medieval Greenland, we hope to demonstrate that even old evidence can be re-evaluated to shed new light on the people who lived in the past.

Thanks to a grant from the Chancellor's Fund at the University of Glasgow, we have realised our vision of a project that not only presents a publication of our new approaches to identity, but also has brought together a network of early-career researchers in the field and supported a series of public lectures at the University of Glasgow by young scholars from around the UK. Two of the lecturers from our seminar series – Oliver Harris from the University of Leicester and John Creese from Cambridge University – have since joined us as contributors to this volume.

Early versions of the papers in this volume were presented during a workshop on 24 November 2012 under the watchful eye of Professor Bernard Knapp. Together, the volume represents the work of researchers from five different nations, representing six different institutions. Perhaps identity has played such an important role in our research because many of the contributors have lived and/or worked outside of their home nations. Having an understanding of what it is to negotiate local, national and international identities in the modern world can help to inform our ideas of how people related to one another in the past, regardless of when or where these people lived.

It is our hope that the accessibility of the ideas presented by the early-career researchers in this volume will inspire other scholars who might not otherwise incorporate identity into their work to consider the ways identity can be found in human society past and present. The ideas presented are not unique to a particular time or place, but rather reflect continuing themes within the human experience.

Contributor Biographies

LOUISA CAMPBELL received her PhD from the University of Glasgow in 2011. Her thesis, entitled *A Study in Culture Contact: the distribution, function and social meanings of Roman pottery from non-Roman contexts in southern Scotland* incorporated an extensive reassessment of all Roman material culture from across northern Britain. Her main research interests are threefold: Roman material culture, the Roman and Provincial interface and theoretical approaches to culture contact. She has taught an evening class at the University of Glasgow's Centre for Open studies and has written several papers which are currently in press, forthcoming and in prep. She is currently coordinating EAA Glasgow 2015, the largest cultural heritage event ever to be held in Europe. She is also co-editing two archaeological volumes on *The Roots of Nationhood: the Archaeology and History of Scotland* and *The Experience of Technology*.

JOHN CREESE recently completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge. His current research explores the interrelations of social power, community, and identity among ancestral Wendat societies of eastern North America. He is currently an Assistant Professor in Anthropology at North Dakota State University.

OLIVER HARRIS graduated with a BA in Archaeology from Sheffield in 2002, took an MA at Cardiff University, and stayed on to do a PhD under the supervision of Alasdair Whittle. His PhD focussed on developing new theoretical approaches to identity, emotion and memory, and applying them to the British Neolithic. Since finishing his PhD, Oliver has worked in contract archaeology and held two post-docs. The first, at Cambridge, was part of the interdisciplinary Changing Beliefs of the Human Body project. The second, at Newcastle, was a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship looking at the different kinds of community that occupied Southern Britain in the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age, and what happens when we think about communities not just as collections of people, but as assemblages of people, things, animals, places and monuments. He has just published a book on the history of the human body with John Robb, and spends his summers digging in Ardnamurchan, Western Scotland.

JEREMY HAYNE gained his PhD from Glasgow University in 2013. His thesis examined the long term effects of culture contact on Iron Age Sardinia. Based in Milan, he has excavated in the UK, Spain and Italy and he regularly does field work and research in Sardinia on Punic and Nuragic sites. His current investigations explore sacred sites and their role in identity transformations in the Nuragic communities of early Iron Age Sardinia. For many years an Associate Lecturer for the Open University, his research interests include identities, consumption practices and performance.

ADRIÁN MALDONADO received his PhD in 2011 from the University of Glasgow with a thesis entitled *Christianity and Burial in Late Iron Age Scotland, AD 400–650* and was a lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Chester in 2013–2015. With a background in Medieval History (A.B., Harvard, 2004), he is most interested in the ontological transformations that came with the conversion to Christianity and the adoption of literacy beyond the frontiers of the Roman Empire.

BEATRIZ MARÍN-AGUILERA is currently working at the Department of Archaeology at Ghent University as postdoctoral researcher. She has recently completed her PhD at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain, where she was granted a four-year government scholarship. During her doctoral studies, she conducted three research stays abroad at the School of Humanities at Glasgow University (2011–2012), at the Spanish School of History and Archaeology in Rome (2012–2013), and at the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World at Brown University (2014). She has done fieldwork in Cyprus, Italy and Spain, and is currently field co-director of the research project at Peña Moñuz (Olmeda de Cobeta, Guadalajara). Her research interests include postcolonial theory, household archaeology, the anthropology of food and consumption, and the archaeology of colonialism and cultural contact.

ERIN MCGUIRE has been teaching at the University of Victoria in British Columbia since 2010. Her PhD from the University of Glasgow examined the role of migration in changing funerary practices in Scandinavia, Britain and Iceland in the Viking Age. Her research interests include the archaeologies of gender and identity, death and funerary rituals, migration, and the life course. She also takes an interest in education and teaching methods to assist students in learning.

ELIZABETH PIERCE received her PhD from the University of Glasgow in 2011. Her thesis examined identity and material culture in the North Atlantic in the period after the Viking Age. She has worked in commercial archaeology in Britain and the U.S., and taught courses on the archaeology of the Vikings and early medieval Scotland at the University of Glasgow and at the university's Centre for Open Studies. Currently she lectures about archaeology on board expedition ships in Scandinavia and the North Atlantic. Her research interests include the Middle Ages in the North Atlantic, exotic materials such as walrus ivory and jet, and recumbent monuments in medieval Scotland.

ANTHONY RUSSELL completed his PhD at the University of Glasgow in 2011. His thesis, entitled *In the Middle of the Corrupting Sea: Cultural encounters in Sicily and Sardinia between 1450–900 BC*, explored the effects of culture contact in the Middle and Late Bronze Age on the two largest islands in the Mediterranean. He earned a BA in English Literature, and an MA in Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology from the University of British Columbia, and an MLitt in Mediterranean Archaeology at Glasgow. He has participated in field work in Tuscany, the Aeolian Islands, Scotland and the Canadian prairies.

DENE WRIGHT is a lithics specialist undertaking post-doctoral research at the University of Glasgow. An advocate of symmetrical approaches in archaeology, his research focus centres on Mesolithic events and the Mesolithic-Neolithic transition in west central Scotland. He is a senior team member and site director for the Strathearn Environs and Royal Forteviot Project.

Chapter 1

Introduction: Creating Material Worlds

Adrián Maldonado and Anthony Russell

The debate over the relationship between archaeological finds and past identities is an enduring one in our discipline. It is also notoriously difficult terrain, but it has the benefit of lending significance to our endeavours beyond our corner of the social sciences. While creating typologies and refining chronologies are part of the stock-in-trade of archaeology – and important methodologies in their own right – the study of identity personalises the past, and makes it more accessible to those outside of the discipline. Indeed, it might be argued that for all the variety of ways of being an archaeologist, the basic task uniting them all is the study of ways of being in the past. The assemblage of sites, finds and theories which make up our field constitute the search for processes of identification.

As archaeologists we recover the material remains of the past, but always interpret and re-interpret them in the present (Shanks and Tilley 1987). We identify these things first by what we think they are and how old they might be, and then we attempt a deeper analysis. Who made this? Who used it? How far has it travelled? What significance did it have culturally? Who influenced its form or function? What other things are associated with it? At every turn we encounter implications for past identities, and at nearly every turn such interpretations are difficult to prove. Yet still we try, and it is this continued push and pull between the impossibility of proof and the desire for interpretation that requires more study. This volume represents ten scholars' meditations on identifying the mute stones, bones and sherds they encounter, but it should not be seen as a handbook to 'finding identity'. Rather, it is a survey of ten different ways of grappling with theories of identification in the past.

This introductory essay serves two purposes. First, we will argue that the pervasive search for identity through material culture, going back to the origins of archaeological thought, speaks to a deep concern at the heart of the discipline. Although it has met much criticism and many dead-ends along the way, it continues

to resurface, a phenomenon which needs to be problematised. Second, we will argue that while approaches to identity are as complex and multifarious as the term itself, it is the search that is important, and thinking about the ways in which it has been used tells us much about why we do archaeology in the first place.

Defining identity

But what is identity, and why do we need one?

Rowlands 1994, 131

We all seem to know what we are talking about when the term ‘identity’ is thrown about. Sometimes we add modifiers to specify one aspect of identity to make things easier: ethnic identity; gendered identity; political identity. In recent years, however, there has been a growing recognition that these categories cannot be so easily separated, and each is crucial for understanding the rest (Gilchrist 2007; Casella and Fowler 2005b). Despite the vast literature on the subject, much research relies upon simple pattern recognition, something which requires constant self-awareness on behalf of the researcher. Birdwatchers use the term GISS (general impression: size and shape) to describe in-the-field identification of species, when the observer intuitively ‘knows’ which bird they see without being able to say exactly how. The human brain’s pre-conscious propensity to find patterns is perhaps partly to blame for the general fuzziness of our definitions of identity: we ‘know’ what it means, but do not know how we know. This common-sense approach has led to trouble in the past, and it is why the need to deconstruct these categories grew to a fever pitch particularly within the post-processual critique (see below).

Nevertheless, it is perhaps worthwhile to attempt some sort of semantic parameters for the term. To bluntly summarise decades of theory, we accept the position that identity is not simply something we have, it is something we *experience* (Meskell and Preucel 2007, 24). Put another way, identity is not a thing *in* the world, but a perspective *on* the world (Brubaker and Cooper 2000, 122). As students of time depth and long term change, studying how certain discourses of identity become materialised should be one of the core aims of archaeology. It is not enough to merely say that identity is fluid, variable, multiple, or polysemic; we need to study *why* and *how* it is made to feel fixed and timeless in spite of this (Gardner 2011, 12–13). Yet even this does not go far enough, as we still need to question why we are concerned with finding identity in the past at all.

Archaeological thinking broadly follows the concerns of the times. Early antiquarians in the eighteenth century looked to ancient sites to shed light on scripture and refine Biblical chronologies (Morse 2005; Haycock 2002). The first ‘scientific’ archaeologists of the nineteenth century had race and nationality on their minds (Díaz-Andreu 2007), later twentieth-century theorists emphasised the power of the individual (Robb 2010) and, as more and more of our lives are expressed and stored virtually, it is no surprise that the last decade has seen renewed focus on the agency of things (e.g., Olsen *et al.* 2012). In an increasingly networked age, we are now becoming more attuned to the way

in which people and things are interconnected and interwoven across both space and time, or as ‘assemblages’ rather than finished items (Harris, this volume). Yet no matter how much archaeological thought changes to suit the times, it seems that what we do is fundamentally concerned with identity. Whether the material being studied relates to settlement, economy, ritual, death or material culture itself, the perceived relevance of these studies is about what they tell us about life in the past and, often implicitly but increasingly outwardly, what this means to us in the present (Harrison 2011).

What has changed in recent times is a shift in focus from the search for *sameness*, so characteristic of cultural-historical approaches, to a greater focus on *difference* (Fowler 2010, 353; Insoll 2007b, 1–3; Meskell 2002, 280). It is again no surprise to find this shift correlates with a wider appreciation of the power of an individual to choose and act, echoing the vaunted (though not exclusive) western idealisation of the individual in society (Hall 1996, 4–5) to the point where, as Jenkins (2008b, 30) has put it, ‘[i]dentity, it seems, is the touchstone of the times’. However, it is also true that the categorization of others is not merely a communal act but inevitably part of *self*-construction (Barth 1969; Jenkins 2008a, 59–61). Since the practice of archaeology has long been about the ‘categorization of others’ – the denizens of the past – it follows that archaeology is a way of interrogating our own social structures in the present (cf. Jones 1997, 135–44). The realization that archaeological theory is as much about who we are *now* as how things were *then* revolutionized the field in the 1980s (see especially Shanks and Tilley 1987). Self-aware archaeologies of identity came into their own, exemplified by a string of publications which grappled with the concept explicitly, the legacy of which is reviewed below. These have recently been criticised for their emphasis on the western post-Enlightenment conception of self as an individual with an inherent capacity to act (Creese, this volume), but before we discard this debate as wholly misguided, we need to look at why it occurred in the first place. If the study of the past is only ever an index of the concerns of the present, then the long-lived and ongoing search for identity through archaeology reveals a fundamental insecurity at the heart of our discipline that requires explanation.

Archaeological theory and identity crisis

It is worth exploring what archaeologists do and their role within the humanities and social sciences. Archaeology has become a continuum of skills, encompassing fieldwork, specialist reports, theoretical debates and interpretation for the lay public. The public end of the spectrum has long focused on identity as a hook to interest non-specialists, whether it be local identities in the context of community engagement, or past identities such as ‘Aztec’ which can be used as a recognisable shorthand to draw attention and aid explanation. With the increasing amount of archaeology reporting in the mainstream media, there is increased pressure for scholars to positively identify sites, objects, and now with increasing use of DNA and stable isotope analysis, even named individuals like King Richard III (Buckley *et al.* 2013).

Yet on the academic side of the spectrum, there has been a recurring challenge to the hegemony of identity as a social construct too broad to be useful (Hall 1996; Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Olsen 2001; Joffe 2003; Pitts 2007; Fowler 2010). How do we square the perennial search for self, in ourselves as in the past, with the academic certainty that identity is an intangible notion that we can never really pin down? This depends on whether we see such uncertainty as a problem, or as an opportunity (Buchli 2010; Olsen 2001; González-Ruibal 2008; Wright, this volume).

Advocates of materiality, memory and personhood have shifted the focus toward the relationship between people and things, and more recently the post-human critique seeks to break down the barriers between people and things entirely. Such views tend to downplay identity as too human-focused at the expense of the materials and their interrelationships (Fowler 2010, 383–85; Webmoor and Witmore 2008). Rather than removing people from the frame, this perspective focuses on their lived experience and our own continuing engagement with a past that is all around us. In the context of this critique, the papers in this volume collectively suggest that there is a particularly archaeological approach to identity, one founded on the realisation that identity is an emergent property of living in a material world (cf. Fowler 2013). Getting to this point has not been a straightforward narrative of ‘progress’ from one paradigm to the next, nor do all the papers in this volume adhere to a single theoretical model (and indeed, many authors have opposed views). Rather, the papers approach identities and processes of identification in all their complexity, from tangible materials to the abstract concepts they embody. As such, the vision of identity offered is not meant to be definitive, but rather more like a set of Lego bricks – tools with which to create new worlds. This introductory essay is part of the *ongoing process of becoming* which we argue is the answer to the question, what is identity?

Conceptualising material worlds and the process of their continual emergence through lived experience of material culture is what archaeology does best. A turn back towards the study of things and materials has characterised the current vanguard in the theoretical literature (Olsen *et al.* 2012; Olsen 2007; Gosden 2005; Webmoor 2007; Webmoor and Witmore 2008; Ingold 2012). The study of material culture is increasingly about memory, experience and affect rather than Anglo-Saxons, barrow-builders or elites. But the move away from historicising categories to ‘worlds’ in an ontological sense, or what was understood as real (Thomas 1996, 64–78; 2004b, 25–26), is not so much a paradigm shift away from identity as a continuation of the long road toward the postmodern demolition of grand narratives (cf. Fahlander 2012). It does not spell the end of identity, but rather the growth of a new way to conceptualise it through prioritising materials and material culture.

So what is the draw toward identity in archaeology? Sociologist Richard Jenkins (2008b, 25) highlights the identity politics of the post-war era, from the decolonisation and post-colonial nation-building of the 1960s and 70s (Jones 1997, 51–55) to the idealisation of pluralism since 1989, as essential to understanding our modern concern with identity. Multivocality and social critique have certainly been a core tenet of

politically-minded archaeologists from the 1980s onwards (Shanks and Tilley 1987; Rowlands 1994; Meskell 2002), and many still isolate the emancipatory potential of an alternate past as the core aim of archaeology (Hamilakis 2004; Harrison 2011). Smith (2004) argues that the purpose of theorising identity is so we do not merely study the social entities which existed in the past, but the processes by which these entities were built and used in the first place, echoing Barrett's call to treat archaeology not as 'a record of past events and processes but as *evidence for* particular social practices' (1988, 6; emphasis in original). In this view, what we are doing is not seeking static or monolithic identities, but the conditions in which those came to have meaning. The value of archaeology is that it brings us into contact with another way of looking at humanity, one which denaturalises what we think is normal and forces us to reckon with difference. Nothing we do in this respect is free from our own politics.

In an important commentary on the history of archaeology, Julian Thomas (2004a) argued that archaeology (the discipline, as opposed to a general awareness of past things, which can be termed antiquarianism) is only possible in a modern context, one in which the historicity of society is recognised. In modernity, society was seen as the product of the past, and the Enlightenment belief that the history of humanity was progressive meant that an understanding of the past could help secure a better future. As Lucas (2004, 113) puts it, the discovery of 'prehistory' was nothing less than a radical new past for a post-medieval future: 'archaeology – ironically – [is] the invention of traditions'. But the belief that the *future needed to be better* was also grounded in a certain dissatisfaction with the situation of the present; as a form of 'cultural critique and redemption, archaeology can be likened to an act of therapy on a social level' (Lucas, 119; cf. González-Ruibal 2008). In this respect, it is worth noting Michael Shanks's (1992, 49–50) view of archaeology as part of the 'counter-cultural' strain in popular thought since the 1960s:

Oriental spirituality, wisdom found in drug use, martial arts, magic, tarot, astrology, comic-book art, science-fiction, a valuation of the body and sensuality, popular anthropology and a valuation of the way of life of other cultures and times (especially North American Indians); also art movements, far-left politics, Marxism and feminism. It is not, I believe, stretching the point to string these all together with an archaeological site. Here are deeply felt convictions and faiths that conventional thinking is not enough, that missing is a crucial human or subjective factor, an embodied knowledge.

While the equation of archaeology with what we might politely call New Age thinking has been criticised, Shanks here brings us closer to why the concern with identity continues to resurface, despite the cycle of critique and deconstruction. A large part of the appeal of archaeology stems from disenchantment and the search for alternatives to received histories, and will thus inevitably be bound up within political issues of identity. This impulse is not unique to archaeology and forms a distinct branch within historical writing itself (e.g., Hobsbawm 1998). However, a look at the changing emphasis of identity-led research in archaeology over time reveals what is distinctive about a material approach to the past.

Materializing identity

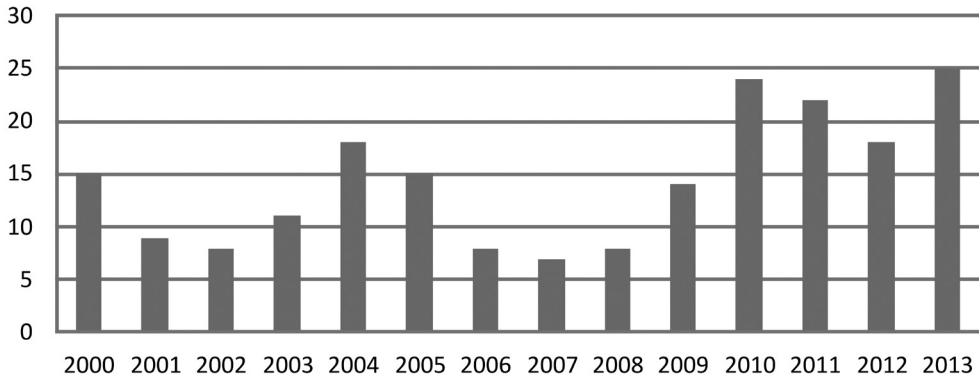


Fig. 1.1: Articles across 28 archaeological journals with 'identity' or 'identities' in the article title or abstract since 2000. Search performed on IngentaConnect online database (<http://www.ingentaconnect.com>) in January 2014.

The *Creating Material Worlds* project was born out of the realisation that many of our peers were engaged in research on the expression of past identities in some capacity. In trying to understand this shared impulse, we undertook an assessment of the state of current archaeological research on identity. This involved a critical review of recent theoretical literature, presented below, along with a wider look at views of identity across the social sciences. Over a decade ago, Meskell (2002, 282) reviewed Society of American Archaeologists meetings from 1991–2001 and showed that sessions on 'identity' and 'politics' increased dramatically from 1999 onwards. We can now extend this by querying one of the larger online research repositories, IngentaConnect, covering 28 archaeological journals. Using this sample (Fig. 1.1) shows that peer-reviewed articles on the subject have ebbed and flowed, with the current 'wave' of identity publications larger than ever before. The spike in 2004–2005 incidentally correlates with the publication of several influential handbooks on identity theory in archaeology reviewed further below. This is just the tip of the iceberg, as interest in identity has grown exponentially in recent times across the humanities and social sciences, and there are numerous reference works now attempting to synthesise this work (Elliot 2011; Schwartz *et al.* 2011; Ferguson 2009; 2008b; Jenkins 2008a). Notably, a number of journals have sprung up over the last two decades to accommodate research on this subject alone, including *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* (since 1994), *Social Identities* (since 1995), *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research* (since 2001), *Identity in the Information Society* (since 2008), and *Politics, Groups and Identities* (since 2013).

Returning to archaeology, the current volume is situated in the long shadow cast by a series of dedicated studies of identity theory in archaeology which were produced

over the last decade. These include *The Archaeology of Identity* (Díaz-Andreu *et al.* 2005), *The Archaeology of Plural and Changing Identities: Beyond Identification* (Casella and Fowler 2005a), and *The Archaeology of Identities: a Reader* (Insoll 2007a). We should also include relevant sections of various handbooks from the same period (Meskell 2001; Meskell and Preucel 2007; Fowler 2010). Each of these works contains comprehensive reviews of the literature on identity which need not be repeated here; instead, what follows will serve as a meta-commentary on the practice of reviewing the literature over a ten-year period.

The aftermath of this wave of readers has been a steady stream of conferences and symposia themed on identity (Tilley 2011; Amundsen-Meyer *et al.* 2011; Ginn *et al.* 2014). Despite the vast literature on the subject, the issue remains a live one, and it is worth asking whether we are now experiencing a ‘third wave’ of identity theory, to co-opt the terminology of feminist archaeologies in the twenty-first century (cf. Spencer-Wood 2011). Most of these reviews situate the beginnings of identity theory in archaeology with the cultural-historical approach exemplified by the work of Vere Gordon Childe, wherein ethnic groups could be discerned through the co-presence of standard artefact types. Childe’s later work could be said to constitute the ‘first wave’ of identity theory, in which his target was the racial archaeologies of Gustav Kossina, but the aim was still to define the origins of European national identities (Jones 1997, 15–19; Trigger 1980). It has become axiomatic to cite the work of Barth, Bourdieu and Giddens in establishing what would become the post-processual critique of positivist ‘New Archaeology’, but the continued need to reiterate the ‘construction’ and ‘negotiation’ of ethnic identities throughout the 1980s, 1990s and even into the 2000s, belies the lingering and pervasive weight of cultural-historical and primordialist conceptions of identity (cf. Halsall 2011; Jones 1997, 65–79). This is most clearly seen in the often vitriolic debates over ‘Romanization’ (e.g., Millett 1990; Woolf 1998; James and Millett 2001; cf. Jones 1997, 29–39) and barbarian ethnicities (Pohl 1998; Brather 2002; Noble 2006). The resurgence of identity theory in the 1980s was heavily influenced by the Marxist critique of nationalism, particularly Hobsbawm’s focus on the ‘invention of tradition’ (1983) and Anderson’s idea of nations as ‘imagined communities’ (1991). Issues of ideology, power and social inequality predominated in the 1980s and ‘90s, as the debate was primarily over the *creation* of collective identity, such as the trends for state formation in the 1980s and ethnogenesis in the 1990s. The first steps toward a self-conscious archaeology of identity were taken in the mid-1990s (Shennan 1994; Rowlands 1994; Graves-Brown *et al.* 1996), but in hindsight these may still be considered ‘first wave’ due to their primary concern with issues of national origin and political affiliation. In this context, the publication of Siân Jones’s *Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present* (1997) was an important milestone, forcefully arguing the need to go beyond thinking of the past in terms of archaeological ‘cultures’ and emphasising the fluid rather than strictly bounded nature of identity.

However, the 1980s and ‘90s also saw a resurgence of feminist critiques which exposed the various facets of identity which make up the social persona: sex, gender,

age, class and rank. In archaeological reviews, the usual watershed moment for feminist theories is Conkey and Spector (1984), although it was not until the 1990s that they had their greatest effect. The work of Meskell (1996; 1999; 2002) and Gilchrist (1994; 1999) among many others is particularly prescient here, as they opened up the study of identity beyond the usual narratives of national or ethnic identity which tended to focus on the elites of society. This is perhaps the real ‘second wave’ of identity theory, which can broadly be said to concern issues of sensuous and somatic engagement with material culture, foregrounding the role of the bodily experience of the material world, and recursively the role of materials in creating bodies themselves (Tarrow 2000; Hamilakis *et al.* 2002; Knapp 1998). The trend was for works to discuss the way identity was maintained, or the processes of *identification* and *difference*, rather than taxonomically assigning identities to artefactual assemblages.

By the mid-2000s, a major criticism had arisen over the usefulness of the term ‘identity’ itself, which had been so thoroughly deconstructed as to have little analytic purpose. Various ways of dealing with the issue of cultural contingency have since been developed, which can only be summarised in the briefest form here. Approaches to social memory and biographical approaches to objects have emphasised the historicity of all human action and the agency of things themselves within this (Jones 2007; Williams 2003; Borić 2010). Theories of materiality and phenomenological approaches see the archaeological record in terms of how the physical world affects perception and dispatches the entrenched notion that ‘man makes himself’ (Miller 2005; Tilley 2004). Attention to non-western notions of personhood, body and self have broken down our common-sense notions of identity by asking not just ‘who was this person’ but ‘what constitutes a person’, revealing new ways of seeing the material record (Fowler 2004; Brück 2004; 2010; Willerslev 2004; Harris and Robb 2012). It even needs to be asked: should humanity or things be the central object of investigation? Is the righteous search for subaltern voices a political imposition to appease a western, liberal worldview in the present? Has the search for identity been a red herring all along?

Two crucial themes can be discerned which characterise the development of an emerging ‘third wave’ of identity theory in archaeology. First, there is the acknowledgement of the corporeal foundation of all knowledge and experience. This includes even ‘intangible’ aspects of belief, memory, emotion and affect which are produced and reproduced in the body through material practices (Tarrow 2012; Harris and Sørensen 2010; Fowler 2013, 48; Lucas 2012, 163–68). Second, there is the relationship between material culture and human agency, in which there is no longer a need for a binary distinction between people and things, as both take on characteristics of the other through their mutual construction (Webmoor and Witmore 2008; Olsen *et al.* 2012). In the so-called ‘ontological turn’ (Webmoor 2007) the focus is not on finding identity but on the processes by which this emerges through living in a material world. ‘Rather than seeing social life in terms of nodes such as people and things, the focus is shifted on to the relationships linking these

nodes' (Robb 2010, 502). If the second wave was all about constructing identities in the past as a way of deconstructing identities in the present, the third wave is more concerned with the way identity is emergent in the past *and* present in ways which feel organic and timeless to those living with them. Taking material culture seriously is what archaeology has been built to do, and that is the theme that brings together the papers in this volume. Identity is always in the process of becoming, but this is always grounded in and even effected by the inescapable material presence of the past (Lucas 2005; 2012).

If the first wave of identity theory was focused on tracing the movement of contained 'cultures' in the past, the second wave spent too long looking for the formation or genesis of identities. This approach presumes identities have a single point of origin that can be pinned down, and that doing so would tell us something about the past. Archaeology challenges these notions particularly eloquently through the study of the things themselves. What we are doing here is foregrounding the material aspect of identity and its immanence through the very act of being in a material world. Now in the third wave, we should direct our attention to the messy but perhaps more exciting drama of how identities come to feel timeless and natural to those experiencing them.

Using identity in archaeology

The question now is how to apply these ideas to real-world archaeological research. The papers in this volume do not adhere to a single theory or paradigm, yet as they are all taken from early-career researchers in archaeology from across Europe and North America, they represent a snapshot of the state of research on identification in the past. All the authors independently share the view that identity is a way of understanding the world rather than a taxonomic category. And while we all take the stance that identity continually emerges from the network of relations between humans, materials and ideas, each paper focuses on a different aspect of these complex interactions.

Before delineating further these paths to identity, it is worth noting one more theme joining these papers. Several papers deal directly with the aftermath of the deconstruction of grand narratives of acculturation, whether of Romanisation (Campbell), Hellenisation (Hayne, Marín-Aguilera), or Christianisation (Maldonado, Pierce). The way in which the contributors instead focus on the lived experience of the material worlds available to them is indicative of the state of the art in understanding processes of identification. Sensuous properties such as colour, texture and smell, and the emotions and memories these evoke, are highlighted in a number of contributions. The authors draw attention to the crosscutting variables at play at the very moment of encounter: the pouring of wine (Hayne), the serving of a meal (Marín-Aguilera), the draw on a tobacco pipe (Creese), or the strike of a flint (Wright).

Another theme running through this book recalls the primary push-pull of identity itself: the simultaneous promotion of sameness and difference. If the first wave of identity theory was about sameness, and the second wave about difference, these

current papers explore the intricate balancing act between the two (cf. Jenkins 2008b, 18–19). The focus on the local and, perhaps, the personal, is what sets the current wave apart from its predecessors, but this does not signify the denial of larger processes of political or ethnic tension and upheaval. Rather than ignoring or downplaying the conjunctures of socioeconomic change, several papers deal specifically in situations of culture contact and transformation, just from the perspective of those effecting that change. Particularly in Mediterranean contexts, a renewed sensitivity to materiality, mobility and co-presence (Knapp and van Dommelen 2010) has opened up new ways of conceptualising hybridity which go beyond choosing between assimilation and resistance. The conscious construction of foreign-ness (Russell, Pierce), the negotiation of material practices (Campbell, Marín-Aguilera), the effect of the colonised on the coloniser (Halstad McGuire). A tendency towards the agency of the subaltern across the volume is the legacy of the postcolonial critique (cf. van Dommelen 2012), but the lesson applies beyond these case studies: hybridity is everywhere and always.

Finally, many of the papers examine the complexity of identity as emergent from a variety of interlocking variables. For instance, Maldonado grapples with the intersection between ideology and cosmology; Russell, Hayne and Marín-Aguilera deal with economics and power relationships; Campbell, Pierce and McGuire examine nationalism and ethnicity; and Wright, Harris and Creese explore the relationship between materials and the ‘thingness’ of humans. Through our workshops and symposia leading up to this volume we found there was a surprising amount of common ground across the time periods and places covered by these contributions, but the approaches we have all taken are uniquely grounded in the agendas and concerns of our respective areas of specialisation.

Conclusion: identity happens

The postmodern emphasis on multi-vocality and pluralism has led us to a place where there is arguably no single paradigm, but a multiplicity of schools of thought (Pearce 2011; Fahlander 2012; Johnson 2006). The question is not whether we have ‘got it right’ – as Joffe noted over a decade ago, the initial exhilaration of discovering new approaches to identity often leads to a nearly ‘messianic’ certainty that therein lies truth and, finally, an answer (Joffe 2003, 85–87). The point of theory is now, and always has been, to challenge the settled assumptions that we bring to the table, renewing the field for the ever-shifting intellectual climate. The obvious question then is what our particular approach to identity reveals about the current climate. If we see identity as a constant state of becoming, an emergent property in a world of relationships with other entities (human or otherwise), it follows that our sense of self is inextricably bound up in what comes before and what we aspire to after. Therein lies the power of archaeology: ironically, the aim of studying the past is to reveal the ways in which the future is always up for grabs and changeable.

The papers in this volume represent ten unique voices on the uses of identity in archaeology. What they share is a belief that identity is worth studying not

despite its slippery nature, but because of it. The fact of change itself is why we are interested in the past, and difference is why the past remains so fascinating. These papers also offer a unique opportunity for comparative analysis across space and time, something our discipline is often too reluctant to attempt. Not all comparisons are fruitful, and not all of our contributors' ideas are compatible; but they all succeed in promoting the debate of the use of identity theory in archaeology. We all look forward to the next volume written on the subject, and the reactions to our interpretive attempts today.

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Chapter 2

Becoming Post-Human: Identity and the Ontological Turn

Oliver J. T. Harris
(*University of Leicester*)

Abstract

Within archaeology a range of new approaches, which we might broadly term relational, or post-human, are developing a radical critique of many areas of our disciplinary thought and practice. For example, they have challenged archaeologists to reconceptualise categories of person and thing and the relations, or mixtures, through which both are produced. So far, however, such approaches have had little to say directly on the concept of identity, despite the latter's importance to archaeology over the last 30 years. Nevertheless, it is clear that these approaches' avowedly ontological level of critique have the potential to make a dramatic impact on how we think about identity in archaeology because of the challenge they make to approaches that prioritise humans over things. In this paper I explore the potential consequences of post-humanism for archaeologies of identity, and set out how our approaches in this vital and vibrant area must be reworked in the light of this emerging challenge.

Keywords: *Identity, post-humanism, ontology, assemblage, vibrant matter*

Introduction

Identity has been one of the most dynamic and important concepts in archaeology in recent decades (for an excellent review see Fowler 2010). Cutting across different axes of analysis, including gender, ethnicity, sexuality, age and personhood, it has contributed enormously to our understandings of the past. Not only does it open up the possibility for examining what people had in common with one another (notions of group identities of different sorts), it also allows us to tease out the differences between past and present in dynamic and challenging ways. Fundamentally, not only does studying past identities open up wider, more diverse and more accurate understandings

of times gone by, it also undermines claims that certain aspects of modern identity (e.g. gender roles, individual personhood) emerge from eternal and essential forms.

I have begun by endorsing the study of identity in archaeology, because in what follows I am going to outline a number of problems with approaches to this topic, drawing on current trends in theoretical approaches to archaeology. Although by no means mainstream yet, a number of archaeologists are debating some of the foundational assumptions of our discipline (e.g. Alberti *et al.* 2011; Alberti and Marshall 2009; Cochrane 2007; Conneller 2011; Fowler 2013; Fowles 2013; Harris 2013; 2014a; 2014b; Harrison 2011; Hodder 2012; Jones 2012; Lucas 2012; Normark 2008; 2009; 2010; Olsen 2007; 2010; Olsen *et al.* 2012; Thomas 1996; 2002; 2004; Watts 2013; Webmoor 2007; Webmoor and Witmore 2008; Witmore 2007; 2012). Whether under the guise of symmetrical archaeology, local ontologies, entanglement, new materialism, object orientated philosophy, phenomenology, non-representational theory or any other 'brand' of cutting edge thought you care to mention, these authors employ a varied set of sophisticated philosophical resources (e.g. from a much longer list Barad 2007; DeLanda 2002; 2006; Deleuze 2004; Deleuze and Guattari 2004; Haraway 2008; Harman 2012; Heidegger 1962; Ingold 2011; Latour 1993; 1999; 2005; Thrift 2008; Whitehead 1964) to critique the reliance in archaeology on approaches rooted in idealism, humanism and representation. Although lumping them under a single heading does severe violence to their differences, these approaches do share this common ground of critique. Fundamentally, they all seek to undercut the various dominant dichotomies of enlightenment thought and, most potently for archaeologists, to change our perspectives from ones rooted in the opposition of people and things, to one that explores how both emerge together alongside a host of other entities. Though not all are equally successful, and indeed not all are compatible, together they amount to what has been termed an 'ontological turn' (Alberti *et al.* 2011); ontological, that is, in that it deals with questions of what actually exists rather than epistemological concerns about how we come to understand the world (Harris and Robb 2012). This matters for us as archaeologists as in many ways it holds the potential to change the terms of our debates. As I will set out in detail below, this ontological turn amounts to a severe challenge to the way in which we engage with the topic of identity in archaeology, and opens up the possibility for a considering a 'post-humanist'¹ past.

However, what this paper is not, absolutely, is a call to end our engagement with the topic of identity. The gains we have made in archaeology through this line of research are numerous and vital, important not only politically in the present, but fundamentally to how we understand the past. Therefore, in addition to the critical elements of this article, I want to draw on the concept of assemblage to propose an approach that will allow us to resolve these issues and continue to include identity within our archaeological narratives. A further point will emerge from this; not only *can* we include discussions of identity within these perspectives, this is something we *need* to do if we are to achieve the goal of the ontological turn of ridding us

of dichotomies. Thus the paper will show that we can develop archaeologies of identity that embrace the differences between people without raising humans on to a separate and privileged ontological plane, and that this is necessary for a nuanced and politically engaged archaeology.

Matters of concern

Before I turn to this more positive role for identity within the ontological turn, I want to set out why these new perspectives offer such a critical challenge to our approaches in archaeology to this vital subject. There are three particular and closely related matters of concern that I want to focus on here that have been the subject of attack: humanism, idealism and representation. In each case I want to demonstrate both why these criticisms should matter to us as archaeologists, and how these concerns apply to our existing analyses of identity. I shall turn to discussions of personhood afterwards, because of their somewhat different relationships to these arguments.

Matter of concern 1: humanism and archaeologies of identity

The first issue I want to confront is the question of humanism. In the terms of debate here, humanism refers to the privileging of human beings above and beyond all the other elements of the world (Thomas 2002). Humanism creates a radical ontological separation between people on the one hand and every other element of the world on the other. Whether it is because of the privilege we accord language, culture or even the human soul, human beings are taken to be not just different from plants, animals and things but *radically* different; a difference of kind. Archaeology, emerging as one element of the study of man in the nineteenth century (Thomas 2004, chapter 2; cf. Foucault 2002) has not surprisingly taken a typically humanist position where we seek to explore human beings, human experience and human society – what we often gloss as the social (Webmoor and Witmore 2008). However, this position has been shown convincingly to be problematic for a number of reasons. Most notably it selects one particular way of thinking about the world – a modernist, dualistic outlook – and takes it to be both universal and universally true. The idea that human beings, and particularly their culture and their language, are uniquely special – not just different – is an idea with great pedigree in Western thought going back at least as far as Aristotle. In particular, however, it is in the period since the seventeenth century that the opposition between human and world has been increasingly codified. The *bête noire* here is of course René Descartes. His radical doubt about the world – that one could only be certain of thought – led him to view animals and indeed the human body as automata (Descartes 2008). A special spirit – mind or soul – animated the latter, marking human beings out as unique (Thomas 2004). However, as numerous thinkers have pointed out this opposition between mind and body,

culture and nature, people and world, was not simply a scientific discovery. In fact it was a negotiated political compromise that allowed the burgeoning worlds of science and politics to be kept separate from one another (Latour 1993). This purification, as Latour (1993) calls it, of the world into nature and culture has remained typical of modernist thought ever since. Nevertheless, this is not an accurate description of how the world works. People are not, in fact, separate from the world, but are always already part of it (Heidegger 1962; Ingold 2000). Thus imposing dichotomies between people and the world actively prevent us from understanding the dynamic nature of historical process, something that affects our bodies/minds in equal measure (Robb and Harris 2013).

It is no exaggeration to suggest that large chunks of the archaeological writing on identity buys into precisely this divide between people and the world. Discussions of identity are unsurprisingly focussed largely on people themselves, with things, landscapes, animals and plants playing a secondary and largely representational role (see below). For example, Diaz-Andreu and Lucy define identity as ‘individuals’ identification with broader groups on the basis of differences *socially* sanctioned as significant’ (2005, 1, my emphasis). Across multiple different discussions of identity, archaeologists have focussed on this crucial idea that identities are *socially* constructed; that is they are produced solely through people’s actions and the wider cultural world in which they live. This is problematic for two reasons. First, it imposes a familiar vision of subjectivity, one that is in fact historically contextual, on to the past. This act of essentialism imports assumptions about agency, for example, that are familiar in a Euro-American context, but would be entirely out of place in other times and places (cf. Strathern 1988). Secondly, because it makes not only things, but also the materiality of human bodies, secondary to the production of identity, it transforms the material world into a quiescent natural substrate on to which various cultural forms can be imposed (cf. Ingold 2011). This universalises a modernist perspective that fails to grasp how identity is the outcome of relations that constitute bodies, things and people, including the materiality of the world (Harris and Robb 2012; Robb and Harris 2013; Sofaer 2006).

Of course some archaeologies of identity have attempted to bridge this divide, arguing that people and things mutually constitute each other. Indeed Fowler (2010, 360) remarks that ‘the ability to consider this mutual constitution of people and things, materials and culture, is a prerequisite for any sophisticated analysis of material culture and identity’. Drawing on Miller’s (1987) theory of objectification, these approaches recognise the problematic nature of the dualisms archaeology has so long relied on, but do not go far enough in objecting to them. Rather than ridding ourselves of a dualistic starting point, they, as Webmoor and Witmore (2008) argue, try instead to overcome, transcend or surpass these oppositions. Because the primary distinction continues to be between human beings and the world, however, the ‘strong arm of humanism’ (Webmoor and Witmore 2008, 58) remains.

Matter of concern 2: identity and idealism

Idealism has been the dominant philosophical position of the twentieth century (DeLanda 2010). Whether in the phenomenological emphasis (particularly in the writings of Husserl [e.g. 1983]) on human experience, or in the emphasis on language and text in structuralism and (some elements of) post-structuralism, language, ideas, metaphors and similes have held a dominant position. This is clear in much of the early post-processual emphasis on meanings and symbols (Jones 2012). What mattered was not the material character of the world, but on the understandings humans had of it, and the way things offered people symbols by which to structure their engagements with one another. Such an approach makes human understanding of the world the paramount question for interpretation and reduces things to representations of that world registering themselves in people's minds (see below for more on representation).

In archaeologies of identity this has resulted in human *conceptions* of identity forming the primary focus for investigation. This has a long history in archaeology, going back at least as far as early twentieth-century culture history, where different forms of pots were understood precisely to be the expression of people's internal mental understandings (Fowler 2010). Thus Beaker people had ideas of Beaker pots and then created them in the world. Their ethnic identities here are ideas expressed in material culture. However, even recent work that has recognised that identities are not stable absolute facts but active and performed constructions has continued to privilege human ideas and language in particular. An example of this comes from Naoíse Mac Sweeney's (2011) work on Bronze Age community identity in the Near East. Here Mac Sweeney (2011, 32) argues that for archaeologists to recognise identity in the past (in this case community identity, but the point stands) we need to identify moments when people actively and discursively viewed themselves as a particular kind of person, a member of a particular kind of community. Mac Sweeney's book is an extremely insightful and exciting work on community, but this idealism means that archaeologists are reduced to spectators trying to peer behind the curtain at what people were thinking, rather than tracing the relationships that existed on the ground in the midst of things – *in media res* (Olsen *et al.* 2012) – and examining the kinds of community and the kinds of identity that existed regardless of whether or not people were aware of them (cf. Harris 2014a).

A simple example should demonstrate that what people *think* is going on does not necessarily define the reality of any given situation. Take any organisation you are familiar with (an archaeology department, a field unit, a museum, a company or whatever). Within it different identities abound. You may have team players, or alpha males who attempt to lead the group in particular directions, or individualists who refuse to co-operate. These identities can neither be assigned simply by taking the word of the person involved (an alpha male might deny they are any such thing) nor by simply sampling collective opinion. Individualists might see themselves as providing dynamic new opportunities for the group whilst others see them as loose cannons. In

fact to investigate this we would need to examine what it is people actually do, and the effects these practices actually have. What determines the reality of identity is thus not solely the concepts people have of any given individual. This is not to say that people's opinions do not matter or should not be considered (and see below on this important point), but that identity cannot be reduced simply to the stuff of ideas.

Matter of concern 3: identity and representation

The result of both the humanism and idealism present in archaeology is that things – and I mean that in the broadest sense possible to include animals, plants, landscapes, buildings and so on – are reduced fundamentally to representations, rather than actual material entities (Jones 2012, 6; Olsen 2010; Olsen *et al.* 2012). What matters is not things themselves, their relations to the world, how they engage and affect each other, how processes of all sorts (chemical, environmental, physical) come to act on them, but rather what they mean and represent for human beings. The clear emphasis here is once again that what matters is how things appear for human beings. Long ago philosophy entered a Kantian compromise. As the advance of science attacked the walls of philosophical enterprise Kant (2007) made a key distinction between the noumenon, and phenomenon, or the actual thing and how it appears to humans (Harman 2009; Latour 1999). This radical gap creates an absolute separation, people cannot engage with the world, only with their representations of it, and because our senses (how we engage with that world) are faulty we cannot be sure whether our representations are entirely truthful or accurate. All manner of forms of archaeological discourses on identity buy into this representational idiom. From culture history, to the analysis of status through grave goods (where gold represents wealth for example), archaeology has numerous examples of this kind of representational thought. Indeed this is something my own work is guilty of. In considering a deposit at the Neolithic causewayed enclosure of Etton, Cambridgeshire, I argued that a particular set of deposits represented a rite of passage creating a particular performance of identity (Harris 2005, 44–45). The series of things deposited – a fox skull, an upturned pot, an antler comb – each stood for a particular set of meanings which I read from the material. The issue here is not that such a reading is 'hyper-interpretive' (*pace* Garrow 2012, 103) but that it looks at the different objects *solely* as representations rather than as much more than this.

If we step away from the ontological divide between people and the world which can only be crossed by representation, however, then different possibilities present themselves (Anderson and Harrison 2010; Thrift 2008). Things now act in the world. Not in the sense of having 'object agency' – a non-statement as Ian Russell (2007) has so rightly said – but as active and vibrant matter (Bennett 2010; Ingold 2011). Objects do not emerge through the will of subjects being foisted onto materials that cannot resist, but instead emerge in partnership (DeLanda 2002; Ingold 2013). Things

do not solely represent something else, they act, engage, perform, reveal, disclose, transform. Fundamentally they *affect* the world. What does this mean for identity? It means that identity is the outcome of multiple relationships that include, but are not necessarily dominated by, human beings. It also means crucially that things' roles in identity are not reduced to what people think they mean – or what they represent. As an example think of a typical academic's office. Along the walls (and probably piled on the desk and possibly the floor) you will see books, lots of books. On one level you can 'read' these as representing an academic identity, and perhaps the number of books can be read as symbolising the relative status of the academic in question. However the books are clearly much *more* than representational (*sensu* Anderson and Harrison 2010, 19). They actively connect the person in question to all manner of ideas, concepts and thoughts. The material qualities of their pages – the fact they can be read at all – are what allow the academic to function as an academic. Indeed through their use in these kinds of practices the books themselves take on identity as *academic* books. They do not merely represent a human being's identity here; they are part of the gathering (along with a computer, connection to the internet, regular supplies of coffee, students coming by to ask questions and all manner of other things) that allow this identity to exist in the first place. Strip away the fabric of material things a person is connected to and you are not left with a pure identity; you do not have a person at all (Fowler and Harris 2015: 131–32; Robb and Harris 2013).

Building on foundations

At this stage I want to make two important points, however. First, the criticisms outlined above should not be taken to mean that I believe we need to rid ourselves entirely of the notion that things can act as representations, symbols, metaphors and so on, nor that human ideas are not important parts of the world. It is quite clear that things are on occasions understood as representations of identity, and the ideas and beliefs people hold have real – that is ontological – consequences for the worlds in which they live (Harris and Robb 2012). The properties of things in relation to identity *do* include their ability act as stand-ins for other concepts, to present meanings and be manipulated to present certain perspectives. These abilities are no less – and no more – real than their other material qualities. This is a central way in which archaeologies of identity can contribute to the ontological turn, which has so far left people themselves and their ideas largely under-theorised as part of the general emphasis on the active and vibrant nature of matter and things.

Second, there is an element of archaeological approaches to identity that I have so far not made reference to, which comes closest to escaping from the humanist/idealist/representational bind. These are approaches that deal with the issue of personhood (Chapman 2000; Fowler 2004a). Personhood is the state or condition of being a person. At first glance this might seem to be overtly humanist, but in fact it is more complicated (cf. Thomas 2002). Approaches to personhood take this element of

identity to be fundamentally relational. That is it emerges from the relations in which a person is enmeshed, both material and ideal, rather than being either an essential element that they are born with, or something that is purely socially constructed. Drawing on analogies with India and Melanesia amongst others, for example, the leading exponent of this approach, Chris Fowler (2004a; 2010), has demonstrated how opening up our analysis to this kind of perspective allows much more complex conceptions of identity to emerge than those based purely on previously uncritiqued ideas of the bounded individual.

The emphasis on relationality means that identities are not solely the province of human beings. Things and animals can also take on person-like qualities and become persons, because they too are produced relationally (Fowler 2004a). Similarly, things do not merely stand for relations, or symbolise or represent them, but actively are those relationships. Classically in Melanesia pigs are part of the relationships between husband and wife for example (Strathern 1988), not merely symbolic of their on-going marriage. Because of the emphasis on relations, furthermore, archaeologists that engage with personhood offer a clear challenge to understandings that privilege the notion of essences – the idea that what it is to be human emerges from something that is shared universally. In contrast to this they embrace the emergent quality of human identities in the mixture and flow of substances, things, animals and people as communities are brought into being (Fowler 2001; 2004b). This also allows them to offer more nuanced approaches to other elements of identity, including gender, because they start from a position that begins with relationships not essences.

These approaches have been critiqued for their reliance on specific ethnographic analogies (Jones 2005) and the manner in which they can occasionally universalise links between certain practices and particular modes of personhood (Brittain and Harris 2010). In terms of the criticisms I have outlined above though, it is clear they come closer than other approaches to identity in embracing a post-humanist and non-representational approach to the world. Things as well as people here have an important role to play (e.g. Fowler 2004a, 59–63). Nonetheless, I would argue they still do not go far enough. Although no longer entirely humanist, the dominant conceptions of personhood remain idealist, so for example Fowler defines personhood as how ‘particular *concepts* of the person are bound up with specific ways of *perceiving* the material world and *valuing* its forms’ (2010, 366, my emphasis). Thus people’s perceptions of the world, their perceptions of relations with things, still take precedence over the world itself and the relations of which they are not aware. Similarly, material things can take on qualities of personhood, and play a crucial role in negotiating personhood, but only when they are attributed that role by human beings. They can ‘reflect’ aspects of humanity, or be ‘like’ a form of person (Fowler 2010, 371), but their roles in and of themselves are not given as full a hearing as they might be. Things remain secondary to a quality of identity that focuses first and foremost on people themselves. This is open then to some of the criticisms I have outlined above.

Archaeologies of personhood remain the most sophisticated accounts of identity that archaeologists have produced and, although not without issue, they remain absolutely vital because of the manner in which they open up new ways of thinking. The focus on relations is absolutely key here. As Fowler argues, this opens up a consideration of how 'worlds are assembled from stone, trees, water, shell, metals, soils, plants and animal bodies' (2010, 377). This emphasis on relations and assembly forms the starting place for a consideration of identity, including personhood, in archaeology that fully sheds its humanist, idealist and representationalist trappings.

Identity and assemblage

Relational approaches are at the heart of the ontological turn; archaeology begins with mixtures (Witmore 2007) or even better 'mixtures of mixtures' (Cochrane 2007, 139). This goes beyond recognising the interrelationships between people and things, to acknowledging people and things as themselves the outcome of relationships. Arguing for a relational approach to identity is only the very first step, however. To begin with we need to be clear about which version of the different understandings of relations we need to draw on (cf. Harris 2013). Here I will set out the particular approach I find most useful, one located in the notion of assemblage as developed from the writings of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (2004), by Manuel DeLanda, Jane Bennett and others. I am not suggesting this is the only way in which a post-humanist conception of identity in archaeology could evolve, but as I hope to demonstrate, this does offer a number of interesting and important ways to deal both with the criticisms outlined in the first half of this paper and to promote other positive moves as well.

What is an assemblage? Beyond its pleasing archaeological familiarity it is also a useful philosophical term. Assemblages are 'groupings of diverse elements, vibrant materials of all sorts' (Bennett 2010, 23), they are gatherings of lines of relations that operate at multiple scales through which emerge the entities we are familiar with in the world around us (DeLanda 2002; 2006) would describe this process as actualisation). This multiscalar facet is crucial; from the smallest atom to a nation state we can describe any coming together in these terms. Thus the cup of coffee in front of you is an assemblage of ceramic, water, ground coffee beans, heat, milk, processes of trade and exchange, histories of contact between Europe and other parts of the world and so on. Equally the coffee within the cup is an assemblage, as is the water in the coffee (a coming together not only of hydrogen and oxygen but also rainfall, water companies, piping and so on) and indeed the ceramic cup itself. Each of these is an assemblage that exists at a slightly different scale. If you bought your coffee from a refreshment merchant, this company too is an assemblage, an agglomeration of people, high finance, land, customers and so on, one working on a much larger scale. Jane Bennett (2010) describes this coming together of humans and non-humans (which are both themselves assemblages not pre-individualised essences) in her fascinating account of a blackout effecting millions of people in

North America in 2003. The electricity grid is made up of ‘coal, sweat, electromagnetic fields, computer programmes, electron streams, profit motives, heat, lifestyles, nuclear power, plastic, fantasies of mastery, static, legislation, water, economic theory, wire and wood’ (Bennett 2010, 25). Tracing the reasons for the blackout she finds it emerges not simply from something like ‘mechanical failure’ or ‘human error’ but from the economic processes that led power plants to be understaffed, via a brush fire in Ohio, to increased consumer demand, to the flow of electrons and the deficit of reactive over active power (Bennett 2010).

This description sounds very similar to the kinds of networks described by Bruno Latour (e.g. 1999). However, further elements of assemblage theory make it distinct. First, assemblages are always in the process of becoming. That is they are not static objects awaiting description but are in the process of coming together (territorialisation) and breaking apart (deterritorialisation) (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 312, 316, 556; DeLanda 2006; Harris 2013; cf. Lucas 2012). Secondly, although the boundaries of assemblages change, they are real historical entities that exist and have ontological reality; they are not impositions of the analyst or the informant on to the material. This means that whilst generic categories like ‘the market’, ‘the state’, ‘society’ or ‘the Bronze Age’ have no place in assemblage theory, specific and actual examples do. Thus we can talk about real phenomena like the European Bronze Age, or a specific historical market in a town, without worrying that these are simply reifications of smaller-scale processes. Again the multiscale nature of assemblage theory is absolutely crucial. The key elements that define the reality of an assemblage are relations of exteriority (DeLanda 2006, 10–11). This is the manner in which particular components of an assemblage can leave and join another assemblage without the former itself being transformed. In a Latourian analysis (drawing on Whitehead in particular) any change in a network results in an entirely new network being produced (Harman 2009; cf. Fowler and Harris 2015; Witmore 2012). In contrast here, changes can take place without assemblages ceasing to exist as real historical actors. To explain this I will return to a particular example – that of a cup of coffee. You can drink half your coffee in the cup (a process of deterritorialisation) and in so doing incorporate caffeine and water inside the assemblage of your human body (a process of territorialisation), without the fundamental character of the cup-of-coffee-assemblage in front of you changing: it is still a cup of coffee. Assemblages cease to exist here when they go through a ‘phase transition’ a moment of change when the assemblage becomes fully deterritorialised, in this case, finishing the cup of coffee. Although the final change (taking a last sip) is no greater than the first that may have taken place, its effect on the assemblage is much greater – thus the term phase transition (DeLanda 2002; Harris 2014b). At a different scale the other assemblages continue to exist, the ceramic cup, for example, does not go through a phase transition at this point.

The use of assemblage theory is quickly gaining ground in archaeology, whether in considerations of the archaeological process as a whole (Lucas 2012; cf. Fowler 2013;

Jones 2012), survey as a defining metaphor (Harrison 2011), alternative conceptions of the notion of community (Harris 2013; 2014a), or sophisticated discussions about particular sites (Normark 2008; 2009; 2010). What is noticeable is that few of these have used this approach to engage with identity. Where they have engaged with topics around identity, such as ethnicity, the result has tended to deconstruct these concepts (e.g. Normark 2006). Indeed Normark goes as far as to remark that reconstructing identities is an 'impossible task' (2010, 167). However, an important caveat is that Normark is referring to 'socially constructed' identities here; that is conceptions of identity that fall foul of the oppositional and dichotomous thinking I have been critical of above. If we attempt to rethink identity from within assemblage theory, I suggest a rather different set of possibilities emerge, as Normark (2012) himself has demonstrated with regard to gender.

What would it mean to think about identity as an assemblage?' Fundamentally this means approaching identity as becoming, as the on-going outcome of relationships. These relationships constitute everything from minerals, places and things to human beings. The relations of identity here are not *between* people and things, because things, technologies, are *organs*, as Donna Haraway puts it (2008, 249), and humans are also organs for things. Describing identity here means exploring these relationships, following lines as they come together into particular assemblages and as they move apart. Identity thus becomes a term for a particular set of assemblages that include human beings, and operate at particular scales. Identity is about how human beings and things are assembled and emergent together in the material world, not to the point of finished article, but as an on-going process of growth and becoming. These are not interactions between preformed parts, but intra-actions (*sensu* Barad 2003) that assemble the human. Identity is a particular quality of the relationships that emerges out of these intra-actions.

This position does not reject emotions, thoughts, dreams, ideas and beliefs as elements of identity (cf. Harris 2014a; 2014b). These too are part of these assemblages and as much part of them as stones, cells and swords. The representational is not absent but moves from being the sole mode of engaging with the world to merely one of many, no more false or true than the rest. Assemblages as Deleuze (Deleuze and Parnet 2007, 71) points out include signs, utterances and all sorts of other elements. Language has its role here as well.

Assembling the Amesbury Archer

All very well theoretically, but how can this be operationalised archaeologically? In what follows I want to examine a single brief case-study to outline some of the advantages that come from engaging with identity in the manner discussed in this article. The example I have chosen is deliberately a well-known, well-published, and extremely thoroughly studied body whose identity has been widely discussed in a sophisticated fashion: the Amesbury Archer, a very rich Beaker burial dating to the



Fig. 2.1: Map of Boscombe Down, Wiltshire, showing the location of the Amesbury Archer burial (map by Ryan K. McNutt).

twenty-fourth-century cal BC (Fitzpatrick 2011). Located at Boscombe Down near Amesbury, Wiltshire (Fig. 2.1), this male skeleton was buried with a wide array of grave goods including five Bell Beakers, three copper knives, over a hundred worked flints including 17 barbed and tanged arrowheads, a shale belt ring, an oyster pendant, two bracers, a pair of gold ornaments and several antler tools (Fitzpatrick 2011, xvi). Notably the analysis of the strontium and oxygen isotopes suggests that he potentially may have grown up in the Alps, and moved to Britain as a young man.

His arrival, close to the start of the period of Beaker use in Britain (which we might, or might not, choose to term the Copper Age or the Chalcolithic (cf. Allen *et al.* 2012)), combined with the richness of the burial, has led to a number of aspects of his identity being foregrounded. These include: gender, social role, wealth and status as well as his cultural affiliation. The latter has been seen as archetypal evidence for the arrival of

new people into the British Isles in this period bringing with them a package of new beliefs (centred on single burials with grave goods), ranking and hierarchy, a sense of gendered identity based around warfare, and new forms of technology that further mark these people as different. The Amesbury Archer, for example, it is argued was clearly ‘ascribed the status of a warrior, a hunter, or both’ (Fitzpatrick 2011, 210, my emphasis). Fitzpatrick (2011, 210–12) is of course using the term ‘ascribed’ here in a deliberately analytical way, to differentiate from achieved status, but this still carries significant and important representational overtones. The gold and copper are taken to be important in ‘displaying status’ (Fitzpatrick 2011, 211, my emphasis). In each of these cases the approach has focussed on the traditional ways of analysing identity seen above. It is humanist, in that the identity of the person is what matters, idealist, in that it is the way in which what matters is principally what people thought of the person in question, and representationalist, in that the material things stand for these new identities rather than being active members of a becoming assemblage. Archery, for example, is ‘represented by arrowheads and bracers’ (Fitzpatrick 2011, 225).

To begin the process of thinking of identity as an on-going assemblage rather than a static representational identity we need to consider the gathering of items in the grave in a different manner. Rather than symbolising identity, the emergence of the grave assemblage speaks to the construction of particular kinds of *affects*, abilities to engage with the world (Conneller 2011). This is not a social construction, but one that recognises the interweaving of human bodies and vibrant matter where identity is a temporarily actualised outcome of these processes (cf. Normark 2012, 126). Thus the arrows (and putative, though not surviving, bow) and the body created a performance together of archery, they produced the ability to hunt, wound and kill. This is much more than simply ascribing status of warrior-hood and hunting, it is recognising the vital role of material things in producing the ability to act in certain ways and thus to cite certain identities. The multiple items of metal, stone and clay do not simply represent status, but similarly help to create it, by the presencing of flows of material from sites of extraction (a long way away in the case of the copper, perhaps France or Spain (Needham 2011, 125) to more local flint and clay sources (Harding 2011, 89; Williams 2011). In the case of the pottery, though, the forms also suggest connections to different regions of Britain (Cleal 2011, 151). The ability of the archer to enter into partnership with this material, to finish and polish the metals is created through the presence of the cushion stone and potentially the boars’ tusks; the antler tools too help to reveal the interweaving of flint, person, skill and performance in the becoming of identity in life and death. Graves are not a snapshot, but rather the conditions through which assemblages are territorialised and actualised – that is made visible in a way we can detect. The objects and the body, itself a key component in the skilled roles made tangible by the partnerships of materials, together allow us to discuss this form of more than human, or perhaps post-human, identity. We have, as Olsen *et al.* (2012, 191) put it, ‘always been cyborgs’.

The body too here reveals the way in which identity was assembled through material things. The left leg of the Amesbury Archer was missing the patella, suggesting that he would have had difficulty moving, he would have limped not ran or jumped (McKinley 2011). The physical structure of his body was altered through this material engagement with the world, its plasticity allowed the right leg to get stronger to compensate for this (McKinley 2011, 83; cf. Sofaer 2006). Certain bodily performances thus became possible at the expense of others (cf. Butler 1993). The assemblage of identities here – including gender – emerges through the materials of the body as well as the materials of things, through these materials it includes certain kinds of movements and not others, and certain kinds of experience – pain – and not others.

Nor was the Archer the only human being involved either. The presence of people around the grave, affected by death in a manner experienced emotionally (Harris and Sørensen 2010), is revealed by the way the assemblage gathers elements to itself. The territorialisation of this assemblage involved people infolding themselves within it, becoming partners in the disclosure of identity (cf. Heidegger 1962). We can detect this in the deposition of artefacts, especially those like the gold ornaments that were not attached to the body of the Archer himself (Fitzpatrick 2011, 236). Leaving the funeral behind, the things and people who departed helped deterritorialise one part of the assemblage. The potential that the grave was later reopened, perhaps involving the removal of a rib (McKinley 2011, 86), suggests further future acts of such separation, where the Archer could be incorporated into new identities and new sets of relations. This still left the grave assemblage largely intact – thanks to the relations of exteriority described above, this was not a ‘phase transition’ (DeLanda 2002).

Far from being ‘an ideal type’ (Fitzpatrick 2011, 226), the Amesbury Archer thus emerges as a specific example, (an individual singularity or *haecceity* in Deleuzian terms). Indeed, Fitzpatrick’s (2011, 226) excellent analysis acknowledges this tension, but the humanist, idealist and representational elements of his account means that these two scales of assemblage cannot be reconciled. Not merely symbolising identity, the objects in the grave reveal the way in which identity is a process of assembly and becoming. The objects here are co-authors with the body, the mourners and indeed the archaeologists of the description of identity (cf. Fowler 2013). Identity at this scale then is a matter of tracing the material connections formed by people and things that connect across landscapes and reveal particular moments where certain concerns are placed in the foreground. We can go beyond this. One of the great strengths of Fitzpatrick’s account is that it examines the large as well as the small-scale, even if these are treated as very different kinds of thing. A more detailed account from the assemblage-focussed perspective I have outlined here would also need to think about these larger scale interactions which spread out over Europe at this time. What would it mean to think of Beakers as an assemblage, and what would this mean for our conceptions of the shared elements of identity in Europe at this time? Fundamentally when examining a burial like the Amesbury Archer what we need to seek to

understand are not the ways in which the burial represents a stable image of identity, but how identities were assembled and disclosed through the interplay of people, things and places over a wide variety of scales (cf. Jones 2012, 198).

Conclusion: why post-humanism needs identity

If we are to avoid what Haraway (2008, 244) rightly calls the ‘foolishness of human exceptionalism’ we need to take both the critique and the promise of the ontological turn seriously. This article and in particular the final thumbnail example is of course only the start of exploring these issues in greater depth. What it does is open up an avenue for exploring different elements of identity within the ontological turn without lurching back into approaches dependent solely on representation, idealism and humanism. Does any discussion of identity return human beings to a rarefied and ontologically distinct position? Absolutely not.

Just as it is essential that we rework identity in the light of the ontological turn, it is also the case that identity can make a vital contribution to this debate. As I have indicated above, identity has not been a prominent concern for authors working within this perspective. Its humanist overtones may well have been off-putting, alongside its apparently transcendental qualities. Where identity has been discussed, by Olsen *et al.* (2012) for example, authors have tended to look at the emergent nature of archaeologists’ identities in the present rather than at past identities. The natural tendency to differentiate from dominant concerns within the post-processual cannon makes this understandable, but in the end it remains insufficient. As archaeologists we are interested in the assemblages that include humans. Whilst Olsen *et al.* (2012, 10) are absolutely right to suggest that we should be as interested in the interaction between rain and mudplaster as between humans and a wall it is noticeable here that the mudplaster – the choice of example is theirs – is a form of material that has a human component. As archaeologists we do not tend to focus on the relationship between things where no human beings have been present (e.g. the Americas prior to human colonisation). This is not to say that we need to make humans ontologically exceptional, but to recognise that our discipline focuses on the worlds that include humans, even if we no longer need to make these humans our sole focus. Our metaphysics remains more than just object-orientated (cf. Harman 2012). As Olsen (2012, 29) rightly argues ‘a turn to things does not represent a disinterest in people’.

This recognition that humans remain important to archaeologists is crucial, because it means that just as we need all sorts of techniques to think about the differences between different forms of pots, so we need lots of techniques to recognise the differences between different forms of humans. Recognising that human beings have different properties, capacities and affects, which includes playing roles in assemblages we can engage with in terms of identity, is not the same as granting them alterity from everything else. In considering how humans as much as things, or the complex mixtures of humans, things, animals, plants and architecture that archaeologists have

called society, are all assemblages, we are required to think about how these gatherings involve identity, even as we recognise that these assemblages are in no way authored by people alone nor constructed solely through representation. If we ignore this we do not undercut dualities, we merely move the boundaries of the real and the relevant to a new location, where the concepts of the world people hold are still placed to one side, even if they are now considered irrelevant rather than primary. Failing to deal with the complex assemblages of identities leaves the people of the past as cyphers, they are not human or even post-human, but merely spaces that can be described by accounts of pots, roads or mudbricks. We return to Ruth Tringham's 'faceless blobs' (1991, 94). This will not do for things, but it will not do for people either, both for our study of the past and a commitment to challenging inequalities in the present (cf. Haraway 2008, 314). Furthermore it is only by realising what human beings have in common, not a shared natural biology, but a historical trajectory that includes the formation of different kinds of identity, that we can trace long-term connections into both the past and the future (Harris and Robb 2012; Robb and Harris 2013).

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Notes

- 1 To be clear by post-humanist I am not referring to any form of science fiction-like escape from humanity. Instead this refers to a recognition that we need to attend to how the human comes to exist in the world in different kinds of forms, it is thus about a move past humanist philosophy to a recognition we have always emerged in world alongside non-humans (Braidotti 2013; Pyyhtinen and Tamminen 2011, 147–48).
- 2 In one sense, of course, it is counterintuitive to rely on ideas derived from Deleuze to discuss identity, after all, Deleuze if he is anything is a philosopher of difference (see Wright, this volume), and identity was the subject of his most strident critique (e.g. Deleuze 2004). However, the form of identity I am interested in here is precisely the identity read in terms of difference – how identities in the past differ from each other and differ from the present. The emphasis on productive difference, produced through repetition, and on non-representational forms of identity, I believe allows us to use Deluezean ideas to discuss this topic productively.

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Chapter 3

Materialising the Afterlife: The Long Cist in Early Medieval Scotland

Adrián Maldonado

(University of Glasgow, adrian.maldonado@glasgow.ac.uk)

Abstract

Early medieval burial in Britain is most often used to reflect historical narratives of the clash of ethnic and religious identities in the post-Roman centuries. The long cist is a type of grave typical of northern Britain in this period (c. AD 400–650) which did not involve grave goods or dressed burial, but instead encased the body in slabs of stone. Attention to the material practices involved in sourcing stone, arranging and closing the grave provides a new interpretation of this burial rite as the creation of new ways of relating to the dead rather than an ideological statement of group identity. The long cist was not a way of preserving the body but reuniting it with the earth through the materiality and temporality of stone. Stone from known places was used to fix the dead in place while taking them out of time. Long cist cemeteries were spaces for negotiating personhood and authoring the body through the creative reassembly of time, place and the ancestral. Materialising the afterlife allowed for new ways of being from which identities could be constructed.

Keywords: *Early medieval Scotland, long cist burial, materiality, personhood*

Introduction

The long cist grave is the most commonly used funerary architecture in northern Britain across the first millennium AD. Its distinctive form, consisting of stone slabs set upright in a coffin-like setting around an extended inhumation, makes it easy to find even when acidic soils have destroyed any trace of the body (Fig. 3.1). Where they have been dated, they belong mainly to the period c. AD 400–650, and are overwhelmingly found north of the modern border in what is now Scotland. Because

these rather anonymous unfurnished graves do not provide typologically diagnostic material culture, they have been treated under the general umbrella of 'Christian burial', under the uncritical assumption they are the opposite of 'pagan' furnished burial in Anglo-Saxon England. Recent work on funerary provision across medieval Britain has challenged the association between grave goods and religious belief, and provided new ways of analysing unfurnished graves (Williams 2006, 102–16, 141–44; Buckberry and Cherryson 2010; Gilchrist and Sloane 2005; Sayer 2013; Hadley and Buckberry 2005).

Comprehensive dating programmes for long cist cemeteries have been a relatively recent development in Scotland, and most of the discussion of these sites has remained in individual excavation reports (notably Proudfoot 1996; Greig 2000; Rees 2002). The author's doctoral work (Maldonado 2011a) reappraised burial practices in Scotland, in hopes of bringing this material up to date with recent theoretical advances, and allowing for constructive comparison with the better-known Anglo-Saxon, Welsh and Irish evidence (Lucy and Reynolds 2002; O'Brien 2009; Longley 2009; Semple and Williams 2007; Corlett and Potterton 2010). Within Scotland, the long cist has been folded into a number of historical narratives regarding social identity: as evidence for Christian conversion, Romanization, British resistance to the Anglo-Saxon immigration, or a combination of these (Dunbar and Maldonado 2012; Maldonado



Fig. 3.1: Long cist 5 at Auchterforfar, Perthshire under excavation; the skeleton was dated 430–610 cal AD at 2 sigma (Dunbar and Maldonado 2012).

2011b). It is the argument of this paper that burial practices do not and cannot be used to simply represent the effect of such causes. Rather, it raises more constructive questions about changing notions of personhood, the body and its materiality, fields of discourse which are well-developed in prehistoric contexts but have yet to be applied to early medieval Scotland.

From prehistory to history: Britain and Ireland, AD 400–650

The fifth century AD saw vast changes taking place across Britain and Ireland. The socioeconomic shifts which followed the withdrawal of the Roman army from the province of Britannia in c. AD 410 led to the abandonment of urban centres in favour of a predominately agrarian way of life, with new petty kingdoms gradually replacing the diocesan system of civil government (Dark 2000). This had knock-on effects in the frontier zone and far beyond in ways that are now being reappraised (Forsyth 2009; Hunter 2007; Fraser 2009; Collins 2012). Across north-western Europe, this period also saw radical changes in the archaeological record of burial practices (Halsall 1995; Andrén 2005, 126–31), and dedicated programmes of radiocarbon dating human bone in Scotland and Ireland have shown that the same can also be said of areas outside the Roman Empire (cf. O'Brien 2009; Maldonado 2013) (Fig. 3.2).

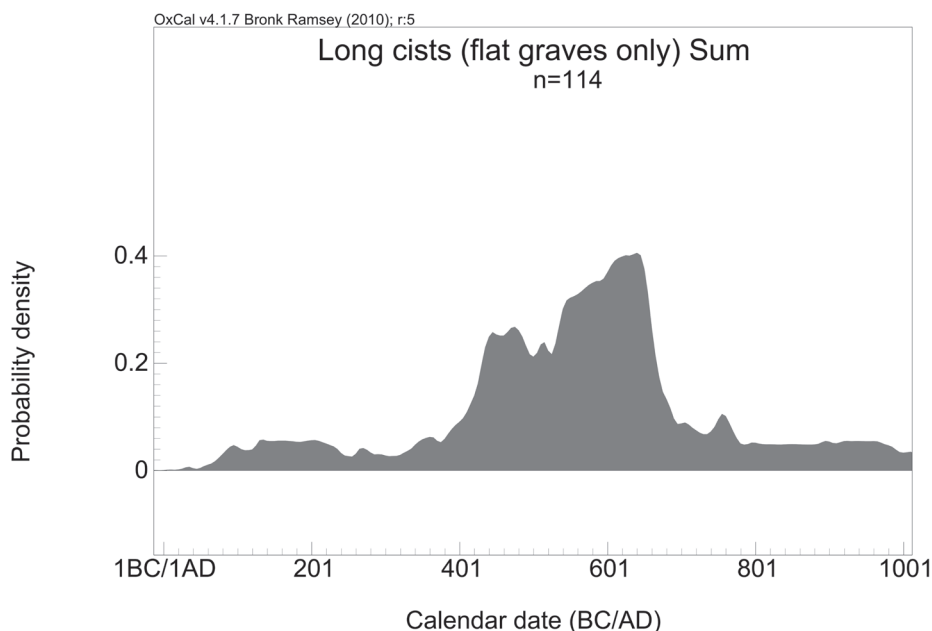


Fig. 3.2: Summary of all radiocarbon dates from human bone obtained from long cist graves with no surface marker (flat graves) from Scotland. Produced using OxCal v. 4.1 (Bronk Ramsey 2009).

Within some easterly parts of the former Roman province of Britannia, new cremation rites appeared alongside the practice of inhumation furnished with grave goods including weaponry and dress items, often labelled 'Anglo-Saxon' and seen to reflect processes of Germanic immigration and/or political take-over to varying degrees (Lucy 2000). In western areas, unfurnished inhumation, most often oriented west-east and sometimes in stone-lined graves, began to appear in the late Roman period, including but not limited to early ecclesiastical settlements such as Poundbury, Somerset (Spary-Green 2004; Petts 2004). In Scotland, ethnicity is generally only discussed with regard to 'Pictish' barrow and cairn cemeteries or carved stones (Driscoll 2000); long cist cemeteries are most often treated under the heading of Christianity, even when the author argues the two should be dissociated (cf. Alcock 2003, 64; Maldonado 2011b; Foster 2014, 101–05). The association of unfurnished inhumation with Christian conversion has persisted (cf. Hoggett 2007) despite repeated arguments against the existence of any diagnostic early Christian burial rite (Zadora-Rio 2003; Halsall 2010, 261–84; Samson 1999; Bullough 1983; James 1989; Effros 1997). Recent work on early medieval belief systems have moved away from overarching studies of Christianity or paganism and begun to focus on the diversity of ritualised material forms upon which these notions were built (Carver *et al.* 2010; Edwards 2009; Andrén 2005; Lund 2013). Indeed, it is worth asking whether late Roman and early medieval burial rites reflected religious concerns at all, and instead related to more local concerns of family, status and landownership among the community of mourners (Halsall 1998; Rebillard 2009; Sayer 2009).

A similar about-face has occurred in the study of early medieval ethnicity in northwestern Europe, whereby the practice of furnished burial is no longer seen as diagnostic of the arrival of a specific migrant group (Lucy 2002; Halsall 2011; Brather 2002). In the study of mortuary archaeology, attention has turned away from ethnicity to more thematic issues concerning the use of funerary rites in the marking of social relations within the community (Geake 1997; Stoodley 1999; Härke 1997), including the negotiation of memory (Williams 2006; Devlin 2007) and perceptions of landscape (Reynolds 2002; Semple 2013). Yet studies of specifically 'Anglo-Saxon' or 'British' burial practices remain (e.g., Buckberry and Cherryson 2010; Petts 2009), and this is largely to do with the historical sources. By AD 730, Bede could characterise Britain as made up of four different *gentes*, identifiable by the languages they spoke: Picts, Britons, Angles and Scots. His ethnically framed view of history has been the subject of considerable debate, with many scholars now arguing that this perspective cannot easily be projected back much earlier than the eighth century (Yorke 2003; Harris 2003). The continuation of ethnic-framed studies of burial thus seems to relate to an anachronistic conception of the early medieval period as a culture war in which rigidly bounded groups fought for hegemony (Wood 1997; Geary 2002; Noble 2006; Theuvs 2000). Just as we can no longer assume that all burials are inherently religious, there is also no need to assume that inhumation practices relate to national political dramas being acted out for the benefit of an aristocratic elite. This paper will not deal with the archaeology of any specific ethnic

group, as the distribution of long cists in northern Britain cuts across areas traditionally associated with Angles, Britons, Picts and Scots (Fig. 3.3). The question then has to be not which identity these graves represent, but whether they represent the identity of the deceased at all.

While several critiques of the ‘ethnic’ value of early medieval cemeteries have been offered, the interpretation of these still too often relies on status and the hierarchical position of individuals and families as the structuring principles behind cemetery organisation (cf. Sayer 2010; Semple 2008). Such arguments often rely on an uncritical view of grave goods as representing wealth, defined on contemporary western notions of accumulations of precious metals or symbols of power like weapons (Brück 2004b). Alternative interpretive models are available which situate grave goods and the material culture of the grave in the processes of transformation of the body of the living to the community of the dead (Williams 2003; 2004a; Devlin 2007; Thompson 2004). Several contributions to this volume (Harris, Creese, Wright) highlight ways in which identities are not restricted to the actions of people but involve materials, animals and ‘natural’ substances. Recent developments of the personhood critique have questioned the western ontological view of the body, using ethnographic studies to argue for a more relational and permeable relationship between humans and the natural world (Harris and Robb 2012; Willerslev 2004; Scarre 2009). Such perspectives have yet to be applied to unfurnished burials in northern Britain, and it is argued here that these theoretical frameworks may fruitfully be applied to the material practices of long cist burial.

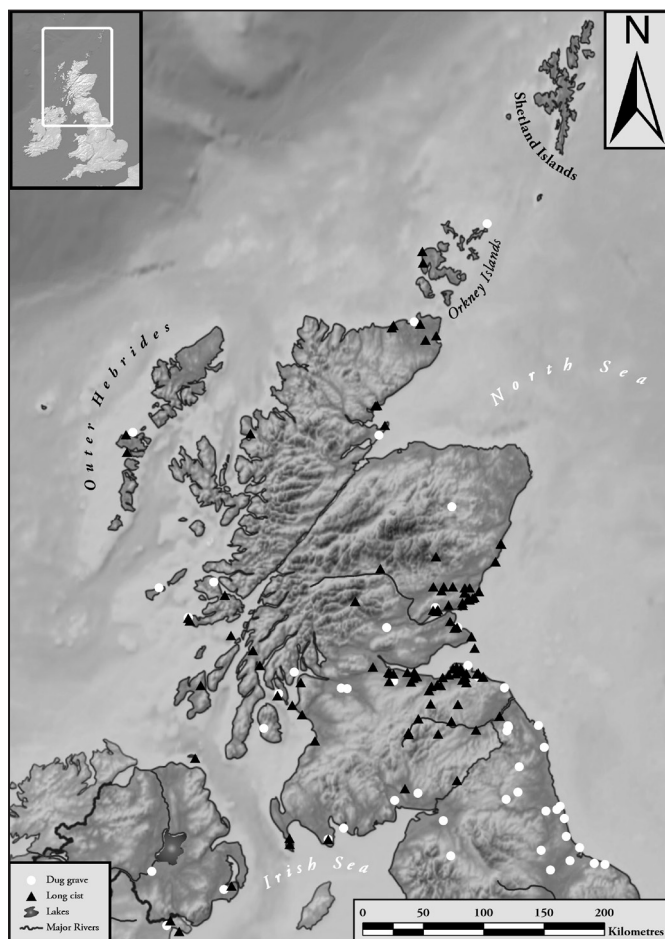


Fig. 3.3: Distribution of early medieval flat graves (with no above-ground monument) (Map by Ryan K. McNutt).

The material culture of death

The long cist burial rite would seem to be a masking ideology, making the deceased appear as equals in death compared to the competitive display in richly furnished Anglo-Saxon graves. However, this view of long cists as unfurnished graves is a continuation of the modernist division between ‘material culture’ and ‘raw materials’ (cf. Ingold 2012; Webmoor and Witmore 2008). In order to investigate the use of the long cist, we must first disassociate it from the ethno-cultural baggage it has accrued within the archaeological literature. Graves, or formal depositions of the human body, are what are left behind of funerary rites, and it is these social practices among the living, rather than the identity of the interred, that have yet to be considered in detail for long cist cemeteries. To begin at the most basic level, we can interpret the grave as a structured deposition: a deliberate and ritualised concealment of material culture to effect a cosmological entanglement of people and place (cf. Chadwick 2012). Theoretical work on Neolithic and early Bronze Age mortuary practices has redirected attention toward funerary deposits as the renegotiation of the ontological status of the living through the circulation of people and objects (Thomas 1996, 169–71; Barrett 1994, 49–52; Brück 2004b; Fowler 2013a). Such perspectives have begun to be applied to studies of early medieval death, approaching the composition of the grave as a form of structured deposition with the purpose of generating rather than reflecting social relationships (Crawford 2004; King 2004; Schülke 1999; Esmonde Cleary 2000; Williams 2007). For instance, Anglo-Saxon grave goods can range from elements of the funerary costume to gifts to the dead including objects added to the grave by mourners (King 2004). Williams (2010) goes further in identifying such grave gifts as ‘objects of memory’, with accrued biographical and social significance through their circulation among the living prior to their deposition as part of a funerary event (Bazelmans 2000; Härke 2000; Williams 2005). The exchange of gifts among the living and between the living and the dead can be understood as generative of personhood among the living by establishing the dead within the social order (Brück 2006; Fowler 2013b).

Crucially for the current study, the view of the grave as a carefully structured deposit has been extended beyond the body and grave goods. The body should no longer be seen as an ahistorical blank canvas on which to project social values, but a multi-authored, permeable and unstable entity which continued to act upon the living after death (Viveiros de Castro 1998; Williams 2007; Brück 2006). Burial practices should instead be understood as discourses of body creation, in which the body was not treated in a way that reflected its lived experience, but rather reconstituted it in place and time for the specific needs of the living (Barrett 1994; Thomas 2000; Fowler 2001). The architecture of the grave itself, that is, the space prepared to receive the body and related items, is an active participant rather than the backdrop to the transformative process (Thompson 2004; Buckberry 2007; Harrington 2007; Lund 2013). The preparation of the ground can also be considered part of the material practice of death, whether by burning, lining or

shoring up: even just digging a pit is an act which could itself be loaded with meaning and mnemonic force (Harding 2006; Williams 2006, 117–23). Because these materials had to be sourced and carefully arrayed, stone, timber and other linings should be thought of as grave furnishings comparable to the grave goods used in Anglo-Saxon areas (Maldonado 2013). Their purpose was to transform the deceased, physically re-embodiment and emplacing the ancestors within the world of the living (Williams 2004b; Williams 2003). The articulated inhumation within a cemetery should thus be seen as a contingent and not inevitable way of treating the dead body; it is a deliberate strategy of body-creation (Lund 2013; Williams 2006, 102–16).

Beyond individuals and groups: identity and the long cist

The emergence of new cemeteries away from settlement areas is characteristic of the early medieval period across Britain, and as in Scotland, these are most often polyfocal or clustered, indicating these were communal burial places for a scattered rural community (Williams 2002; Sayer 2009). Cemeteries were thus not just repositories for the dead, but also gathering places, liminal ‘places of power’ activated and mediated by the ancestral presence (Härke 2001; Effros 2003; Williams 2004b). Both the early Irish and Anglo-Saxon legal texts reveal the centrality of reciprocal social obligations to the structuring of early medieval society (Charles-Edwards 1993; Thornton 2009), and there are many indications such obligations included the dead as well as the living. Social contracts from the swearing of oaths and settlement of disputes to tribal gathering and the inauguration of kings took place at burial sites, suggesting the agency of the dead could legitimate social reproduction (Ó Carragáin 2003, 149–50; Gleeson 2012). It was not only biological ‘ancestors’ who were efficacious in this way (Whitley 2002); the legitimating power of the dead was extended to both recent and prehistoric forebears, and both recent and prehistoric barrows could be used as ways of enforcing and transgressing land claims (O’Brien and Bhreathnach 2011; Semple 2013; see also Halstad McGuire, this volume).

As such, these practices could be signalling the formation of a wider collective identity expressed through regular gatherings at funerals, but what we are seeing archaeologically are variations on a wider theme of the dead being assembled to create a space where ancestral agency could be accessed by the living (Williams 2004b). The incorporation of antecedent landscapes and sacred topographies would have been specific to each site and continually re-imagined among the mourners with every funerary event. Cemeteries can instead be reframed as agglomerations of similarly-constructed burial deposits, with the potential for discrete households to be perceived (cf. Sayer 2010). In other words, these are the places where funerary practices were developed, experimented with and renegotiated (Theuvs 2000, 11–12).

This makes it difficult to see these sites as expressions of a single group identity such as a religion or ethnicity, so much as the places from which these concepts *could* emerge; simple similarity of practice is not enough to argue that a group identity is

being signalled. In his critique of ethnicity, Brubaker (2004, 12) questions the timeless, decontextualised notion of a 'group' as a unit of analysis, defining it as 'a mutually interacting, mutually recognizing, mutually oriented, effectively communicating, bounded collectivity with a sense of solidarity, corporate identity, and capacity for concerted action'. Defined on Brubaker's terms, ethnicity is not a quantifiable or measurable entity, but a situational and historically-contingent strategy for promoting *groupness* (cf. Jones 1997; Pohl 1998; see Russell, this volume). As such, it is the kind of strategy that draws upon and reinterprets existing practices such as funerary rites as expressions of group identity. Early medieval cemeteries are instead most often communicating local values inward to the community of mourners rather than outward on a national stage (Lucy 2002).

This still begs the question of what kinds of communities used these sites. The term 'community' is another way in which collective agency is often insinuated onto the burial record. The clustered layout of these cemeteries implies their use by several communities rather than a single coherent group, but we can go further still by incorporating place and material culture. Recent work exploring non-western ontologies has emphasised the importance of substances and permeability between humans and non-humans for understanding prehistoric material practices (Ingold 2000; Fowler 2004, 56–70). Descent in such contexts involves not only the blood ties of kinship, but the transmission of any aspect which makes up the relational person, including animals, materials and landscapes. As such, the community is not just a self-aware collective, but an assemblage of people, places and things; communities 'do not impose themselves *on* particular places; rather, they emerge *through* them' (Harris 2014, 89). In light of the above critique, it should be stressed that neither the 'central place' nor the 'community' existed prior to the use of these sites as cemeteries – both are being actively assembled through the ritualisation of mortuary practice in the fifth to seventh centuries (Theuvs 2000). Harris' view of communities as assemblages of people, animals, materials and landscapes allows for an understanding of these sites as a local discourse of place-making through the interment of the deceased.

The long cists of Scotland

The above has established some of the ways in which the long cist burial rite may be dissociated from the interpretive baggage it has accrued. However, it will become clear that the shared ritual of enclosing the grave in stone has considerable value for our understanding of belief and social memory in the transition between prehistory and history. To do so will require a close look at the ritualised practices involved in constructing cists. The next step will be to situate these material practices in both space and time to avoid imposing an abstract theoretical framework onto a vast spectrum of sites.

Constructing cists

The variability of cist construction means we should not generalise about its use across the whole of Scotland. Typically, the enclosure of a body in stone is described as protective of the dead, with the stones acting as a coffin or sealed container reflecting ‘a need to distinguish the body from the soil’ (Lund 2013, 54). However, there is enough evidence to show that this was not always the case. Lidless cists are a common find, though they are usually dismissed as attributable to plough damage. It is possible that these early cists may have been lidded with organic materials, as timber lids were occasionally encountered at Whithorn, Dumfries and Galloway (Hill 1997). Yet at the site of Kingston Common, East Lothian, lidded and lidless cists were in discrete clusters across the site (Suddaby 2009), making it likely that stone linings were a deliberate choice. In Ireland, where long cists have a more restricted chronology, a progression from lidless cists to coffin-shaped, roofed ‘lintel cists’ has been posited (O’Brien 2009). As such, the use of lidless cists may not always be explained by differential preservation, but rather a sign that framing the corpse rather than containing it was the primary concern of the long cist rite.

We should also avoid the assumption that stone linings always had a purely functional aspect. There are numerous recorded instances of stone placement in Anglo-Saxon burials which provide a useful parallel. The Bowl Hole burial ground below Bamburgh Castle, Northumberland has been called a long cist cemetery since its first mentions in the antiquarian literature, but recent excavations have shown that few, if any, of these graves were in long cists in the sense of having a complete stone lining; rather, many graves had one or two upright stones placed around the body (Groves 2010). In a later example, the late Saxon churchyard of Raunds Furnells, Northamptonshire also used occasional settings of stones rather than cists, but in some cases, these were connected with injuries or lesions (Williams 2006, 108–11). In these cases, the stone lining may be seen as a symbolic gesture rather than a functional barrier, with a token deposit of stones serving an amuletic function. The choice of long cist as burial type may thus have more to do with the efficacy of stone in the funerary rite more than any need for corporeal integrity or a belief in the bodily resurrection. Seen in this light, the long process of sourcing and placing stone in the long cist grave becomes more of a relocation of substances in which the flesh of the corpse is being joined with the earth rather than being separated from it (cf. Thomas 1996, 164–68).

In-closure and out-closure

The act of burial can primarily be seen as an act of concealment, and so the final act of closure would have been the climax of the ceremony. Halsall (2003) has argued that the fleeting display of the cadaver involved in furnished inhumation burial served to reinforce the retention of memory among the funeral party, even without the use of permanent grave markers. It should also be emphasised that the display of such

a 'funeral tableau' is just one stage in the longer process of engagement with the cadaver involved in early medieval funerary rites, and that the process of closure and backfilling of the grave is a crucial part of the process of structuring social memory (Williams 2007). Yet long cists are joined by log coffins and simple dug graves in early medieval Scotland, so there is no sense that lining a grave in stone (or at all) was strictly necessary for the successful completion of the funerary ritual. The long cist is instead a ritualisation of the act of closure or consignment to the earth, providing a glimpse into the funerary customs involved in creating these otherwise anonymous graves.

The use of token deposits of stone described above does indicate that stone was seen as protective or amuletic in some way; however, we need to be clear whether the stone lining offers protection of the deceased or *from* the deceased. Studies of Anglo-Saxon deviant burials – prone burials, decapitations, and other seemingly non-normative practices – show a belief in ritual pollution or spiritual danger around the cadaver and fear or dread of those who died in inauspicious circumstances (Semple 1998; Reynolds 2009). While decapitation and other forms of execution-style deviant burials are rare in early medieval Scotland, prone burials, stray burials, multiple burials and other variations are known across northern Britain (Maldonado 2011a, 117–20). Carefully structured inhumation burial practices were not merely performed out of 'respect' for the deceased, they were also ways of managing death pollution (cf. Metcalf and Huntington 1991, 79–107).

The interpretation of ritualised acts of closure depends on perceptions of the permeability of the body and the ways it was susceptible to attack in the early medieval worldview. Studies of ornament on early medieval dress items have pointed to the apotropaic qualities of animal art and interlace patterns (Dickinson 2005; Clarke *et al.* 2012, 23–29), calling to mind a vibrant ecology of spirits and dangerous forces which could be repelled through efficacious wrapping of the body (cf. Gell 1995; Viveiros de Castro 1998). Going beyond the body to landscape context, early medieval settlements also employed the grammar of defense in symbolic systems of enclosure. In Iron Age and early medieval Ireland, attention has been drawn to the 'hengiform' enclosure ditches around royal burial sites where the bank is outside the ditch, indicating that otherworldly forces were intended to be closed inside these sites (Warner 2000; Dowling 2006).

These parallels point to an immanent supernatural realm in which the body was subject to spiritual attack in life, but in death could also become a source of pollution itself. The labour involved in sourcing and placing stone discussed below can be seen as a rite of passage in which the dangerous body is separated, transformed and then reincorporated safely back into the world of the living (van Gennep 1960 [1909]). In this light, the closure of the grave can be understood as a performance which materialises the incorporation of the dead into the realm of the ancestors, mitigated through the use of efficacious deposition of stone. The stone could be acting in two different ways: what we might call 'out-closure', protecting the dead from outside elements, or 'in-closure', sealing the dead in the grave to protect the living. Both actions highlight the agency

of the cadaver in the mortuary rite, but importantly neither relate to the identity of the deceased in life so much as how they were handled by the living after death (Hertz 1960, 61–76). The key to understanding practices of in-closure and out-closure in the long cist is treating the stone lining as an active participant in the funerary ritual.

The temporality of stone

The long cist was not unique to Scotland, nor was it an invention of the early medieval period. The use of stone lining for burials in Britain dates back to the Neolithic, where chambered cairns with internal compartments made of upright stone slabs held the carefully sorted bones of numerous individuals (Barrett 1994, 51–54). From the Bronze Age onwards, single burials in stone-lined pits, often termed short cists, appeared in Scotland (Brück 2004a). The Iron Age in Scotland was until recently characterised by its archaeologically invisible mortuary practices, with only a handful of known burials (Close-Brooks 1984; 1984; Whimster 1981, 172–74). Thanks to recent radiocarbon dating initiatives, there is now a sizeable corpus of articulated inhumations from before AD 400 (Maldonado 2011a, 82–97). Inhumation remained a minority rite in the Iron Age, and the variety of practice among these shows a highly regionalised and idiosyncratic approach to burial (Armit *et al.* 2013; Shapland and Armit 2012).

One interesting pattern across the inhumations of Iron Age Scotland is the use of stone and abandoned stone monuments. Burials of the later Iron Age in Scotland experimented with different uses of stone lining, including long cists. At Cockenzie, East Lothian, a rare example of a later Iron Age inhumation cemetery, three oval-shaped cists and one short cist made of coursed masonry were used alongside two simple oval pit graves (Dalland 1991). At Balnabruach near Portmahomack, Ross, two long cists containing extended inhumations were dated to the early centuries AD, alongside an earlier short cist with a crouched inhumation (Carver 2008, 80–81). Iron Age inhumations are more likely to be found in or near abandoned settlement sites in the northern and western maritime zones, much like the long cists of Galson, Lewis, dated to the early centuries AD and cut into the midden of an abandoned settlement (Neighbour *et al.* 2000; cf. Badcock and Downes 2000). Numerous demolished broch sites across Scotland have inhumations cut into the rubble layers (Piggott 1951, 105–107; Ballin-Smith 1994).

Hence it seems that throughout prehistory, and especially in the later Iron Age, the deposition of human remains in northern Britain had a strong association with stone linings and stony contexts, including the form of long cist burial under study here. Does the early medieval long cist then represent continuity with Iron Age practice? This is unlikely given the sheer variety of funerary practices used in Iron Age Scotland, with inhumation, cremation and excarnation all attested just in East Lothian, for instance (Armit *et al.* 2013), and the fact that early medieval long cist cemeteries are rarely found in the same location as Iron Age inhumations. The evidence for early medieval settlement is still rare in northern Britain, but cemeteries seem generally to be placed far from the home. Despite this, the reuse and recreation of prehistoric burial

monuments is a striking feature of early medieval Britain and Ireland, and long cists seem to be evoking ancient practices. Henshall (1956, 268–69) noted how frequently the long cists of the Lothians are found alongside Bronze Age burial evidence, such as the Catstane (discussed below) where the cemetery is structured around a reused standing stone and kerb cairn. Similarly, Winlow (2011, 347–48) has indentified a strong link between early medieval burials in Tayside with ancient monuments. The use of a ‘prehistoric’ form of grave along with a shift in landscape location of burial speaks to a desire to create new ancestral foci in a time of socio-political upheaval (cf. Driscoll 1998). In this context, long cists can be seen as a creative citation of localised notions of both time and place in which stone could have temporal as well as material qualities. The long cist was a method of reworking ancestral time as well as place (Thomas 1996, 78–82; Williams 2006, 33–35; Härke 2001).

The materiality of stone

Recent discussions of the materiality of stone within prehistoric mortuary contexts across Britain form a useful parallel here. To explain why long cists became the dominant grave type into the early medieval period, we also need to consider their place-making capacity, and this is bound up with the efficacy of stone as a recurring element through time. Chambered tombs can be understood as places of transformation of the dead, but their power to do so stems from an elemental understanding of stones as vibrant, animate substances in their own right (Fowler and Cummings 2003; MacGregor 2008; Cummings and Whittle 2004, 72–77). Stone can also act as a powerful mnemonic device, evoking memories which tie people to place and generate a sense of belonging (Jones 2004; Tilley 2004; Scarre 2009). This attention to the affective and transformative capacity of stones imbued with myth and memory helps reanimate the lifeless stone linings of long cists as portrayed in excavation reports. In early medieval Scotland, it is clear that certain kinds of flagstone were carefully selected for use in long cist burials (Proudfoot 1996, 403). Usually this appears to be locally available stone, as at Four Winds, Longniddry, East Lothian where the barnacles still adhering to the surface of some slabs indicates they were sourced by the shore some 200 m to the north (Dalland 1992). At the Catstane, Midlothian long cist cemetery (Fig. 3.4), cists of either shale or sandstone were divided into spatially distinct clusters arranged around a possible Bronze Age kerb cairn (Cowie 1978). There is rarely any evidence for dressing of stone, and the hundreds of slabs needed for larger cemeteries indicate that gathering the appropriate stone was a key part of the funerary ritual, begging the question of whether family members or certain specialists were tasked with the job (Williams 2006, 142–43).

The rare instances of reused stones highlight the active role stones could play in the burial rite. Cists made of reused Roman masonry are known from Thornybank, Midlothian (Rees 2002), Lasswade, Midlothian (Henshall 1966) and Lyne, Scottish Borders (Corder *et al.* 1999); at the former two sites, the nearest stone-built Roman

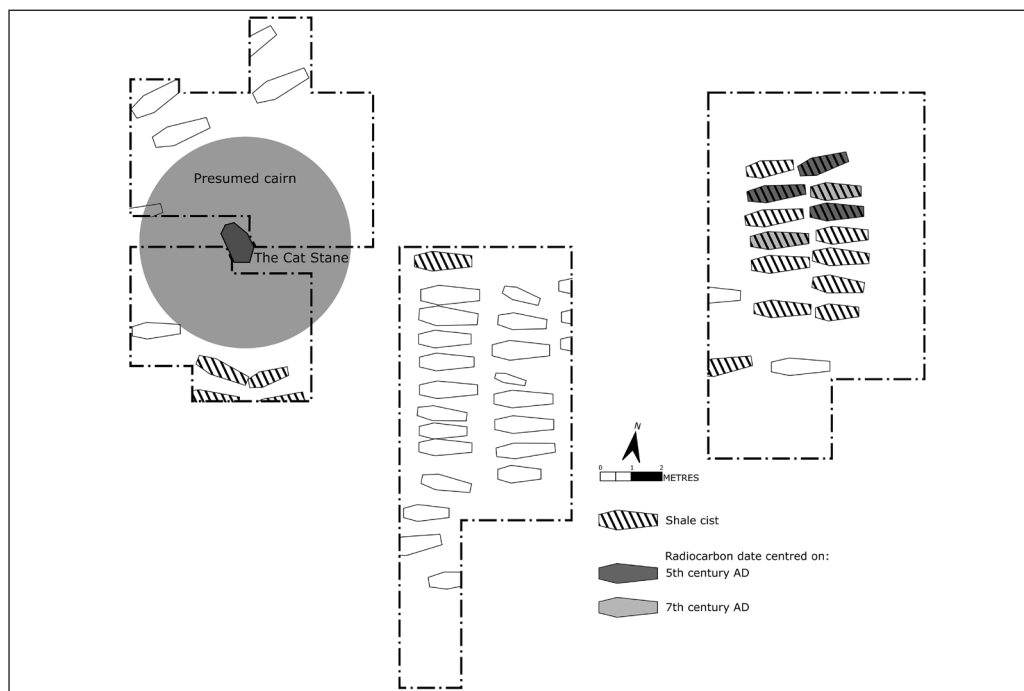


Fig. 3.4: Simplified interpretive plan of the Catstane, Midlothian cemetery after Cowie 1978 (redrawn by the author).

buildings are over 4km away, and this reuse will have marked a considerable investment of time and labour. The stone may have been chosen for its distinctive texture, a biographical association with the deceased or as a citation of existing myths or legends surrounding these ancient carved stones, as there is considerable evidence for the reuse of Roman masonry across northern Britain (Bell 2005; Maldonado 2015). A number of long cists across Scotland incorporate stone querns or pot lids, often fragmented, forming a tangible mnemonic link to the home and the cist as a new home for the dead (Maldonado 2011a, 100). The reuse of Pictish symbol stones as cist material provides further evidence of the agency of stone on the burial (Clarke 2007, 29–31). The handful of instances where sculpture is found in a burial are all in some way deviant, as they contain evidence for cremation or multiple burial, both of which are rare in a Scottish context (Maldonado 2011a, 100–101; 107–109); a similar trend has been noted in Viking-Age graves reusing picture stones in Gotland (Rundkvist 2012). In these cases, the stone lining can be shown to be tailored to the specific circumstances of the burial. The incorporation of stones with biographies of their own shows that stone linings and can be considered furnishings akin to grave goods (Williams 2006, 144; Maldonado 2013). They can thus be understood as strategies for re-authoring the body of the deceased, a key aspect of the funerary ritual.

While long cist graves are usually discussed as a static burial form, the above discussion of the careful selection of stone highlights the potential for variation and creativity. Excavators of these sites have sometimes been able to discern a pattern for the construction of cists unique to each site: at Hallow Hill, for instance, the cists were built at the west (head) end first, with less well-shaped stones left for last at the east (foot) end (Proudfoot 1996, 403–406). However, at Hallow Hill as at other sites, there was considerable variation of cist construction and a good number of unlined dug graves as well. About half of the graves at Thornybank were in log coffins rather than cists, another high-investment form of grave lining contemporary with long cists (Rees 2002); at the square barrow cemetery at Redcastle, Angus, both log coffins and long cists were found beneath barrows (Alexander 2005). Whether in stone or wood, the lining of graves in what we might today consider ‘natural’ materials seems to have been the main form of funerary provision in these sites. The use of tree trunks and unworked stone suggests that these forms of funerary provision were creating a tangible link to known places, to which the dead were being returned or reunited.

Conclusions: materialising the afterlife

All this creates a vision of early medieval burial practices as new ways of conceptualising the self in relation to the social body. Seeing burial as an act of efficacious deposition of various substances and allowing place, earth, timber and stone a role in constituting the person, the cadaver is more than just a repository for the memory of the deceased but a powerful invocation of the supernatural. Grave furnishings become ways of enchainning the living to the dead in a reciprocal relationship rather than expressions of status and power. The referencing and reproduction of burial rites in each subsequent grave was not an act of ethnic affiliation but a way of creating and expressing a conception of relational personhood in which the self is constituted of relationships with others, including the community of the dead (Fowler 2004; Brück 2004b). The burial of the fully articulated body was seemingly crucial to the efficacy of the deposit, as there is little evidence for disturbance of long cist graves in Scotland. The long cist may thus be seen as achieving a balance between out-closure, preserving the integrity of the body, and in-closure, the retention of the essence of the dead in a fixed location, achieved by the careful construction of the grave.

What these practices reveal, then, is not a power struggle amongst elites or a clash of ethnic groups. Rather, it shows an emerging reinterpretation of the body in society as authored through material practices and relational notions of the self, not a bounded entity given at birth (Fowler 2004). The practices of wrapping, closure and transformation of the body were a way of creating a new form of being strongly based as much on kin relations as a desire to manage the threat of an imminent otherworld. Stone itself was shown to be efficacious not just as an evocation of place but of time: stones could be chosen for their links to mythical and remembered pasts, and through their permanence, to aspired futures. The laborious sourcing of stone from known

places aided the safe return of the body to the earth, engaging the memories of the living and re-embodying the dead in a new skin redolent with myths of place and history (cf. Gell 1995; Viveiros de Castro 1998).

We can now return to the original question of whether or not long cists were actively creating a sense of group identity. The choice to reject grave goods has been seen as a fundamental distinction between ‘Celtic’ and ‘Germanic’ graves, but the interpretation used here, of stone linings as an active form of furnishing, necessitates rethinking this issue. The distribution map approach (Figure 3.3) hides the complexity behind the spread of burial rites, and long cists are in fact much more widely attested than this map allows, as many cairns and barrows also cover cist graves. Such monumental graves form a different kind of kinship statement, and must be the subject of future work along the lines proposed here. All these burial rites were being formed and experimented with in the fifth to seventh centuries. Rather than a self-conscious rejection of outside influences, what this study reveals is a much more local outlook and management of these sites, with decisions made and relations being expressed unique to each grave.

It can be seen that a certain level of communality is being created by these practices, but it is a much more intimate one than is allowed by the historical narratives of cultural strife on a national scale. Inhumation burial in cists was a mortuary technology used to create and reinforce a form of personhood which was distributed among mourners, the recent dead and specific memories embedded in a new sacred topography. In short, the function of these graves was to embody the ancestors and materialise the afterlife, fixing the dead in place but through the use of stone perhaps taking them out of time. We are seeing the negotiation of personhood, not its finished form. These are the building blocks of the identities that eventually sedimented into the political *gentes* described by Bede in the eighth century, as people came to live in a landscape populated by the ancestors.

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Chapter 4

Move Along: Migrant Identities in Scandinavian Scotland

Erin Halstad McGuire
(*University of Victoria, ehalstad@uvic.ca*)

Abstract

Theories of migration have recently begun to make a comeback within early medieval archaeology, now built around understanding the new identities that migrants create as they struggle to redefine themselves in the context of their new homes and communities. This paper will explore how migrant and gendered identities are inextricably interconnected within the Viking Age burial rites of Scotland. Bringing together the results of large-scale statistical analyses and key case studies, it is proposed that Norse families living in Scotland felt a clear need to set men apart in the funerary record, emphasising masculine identities in association with a warrior ideal. Intriguingly, the gendered artefacts associated with feminine burial display more flexibility than their masculine counterparts, suggesting that although the marking of gender remained important for women, there were more opportunities to diversify the assemblages in locally specific ways. Finally, for both men and women, funerary assemblages and location within the landscape appear to have been interrelated. Graves were set apart from settlement sites and often associated with prominent features within the landscape, both natural and man-made. The construction of this funerary landscape may have been connected to the creation and display of migrant identities, particularly those associated with warrior or pagan ideals.

Keywords: *Viking Age Scotland, migration, burial, gender, masculinity*

Migration shapes people just as people shape the spaces in which they settle. The purpose of this paper is to look at the nature of masculinity and femininity in the context of the Viking-Age settlement of Scotland, looking not only at what practices may be traced back to Scandinavia, but most especially at how and why they may have

changed in an emigrant context. Through combining large-scale statistical analyses with individual case studies, it is possible to tease out some of the richness of the archaeological record. That the Scandinavian expansion in the late eighth through eleventh centuries had a profound impact on the populations of the areas into which they moved is a given (see Barrett *et al.* 2001, for example). What has not yet been considered in depth is how this diaspora shaped the settlers themselves. This paper begins the examination of the nature of gender identities in Scandinavian Scotland, through the funerary record. These gender identities are played out as part of the performance of funerary practices – they are statements of identity, power, and place in a contested landscape, where settlers may have competed with each other as well as with the people on whose lands they settled.

The Viking Age in Scotland

The first documented Viking raids on the British Isles occurred in AD 787 (Portland Bill, Dorset), AD 793 (Lindisfarne, Northumberland), and AD 794 (Iona, Argyll and Bute). It has been suggested, however, that interactions between Scandinavia and the Isles began much earlier (e.g. Ballin Smith 2007). Archaeological evidence for the earliest settlements in Scotland is limited, in part because the palimpsests present on sites like Jarlshof, Shetland and Buckquoy, Orkney are challenging to disentangle, especially where it is unclear whether the settlers took over previously occupied houses before building their own. Evidence is also scarce in areas where we would expect to find it: for example, Shetland is comparatively close to Norway and could be expected to have some of the earliest settlement remains, yet these remains are elusive (but see Bond and Dockrill forthcoming for a new perspective on the Viking settlement of Shetland). Regardless of the problems with identifying the earliest Viking activity in Scotland, archaeological evidence suggests that the Norse presence was well established by the ninth century.

Textual sources tell us that the Vikings came to Scotland to settle, but the nature of this early settlement is contested, especially regarding the interactions between the local population and the incomers (see Morris 1996 for a historiography of this debate). Although there is no consensus as to what happened between the Norse and the natives in Scotland, the general tone of academic research currently seems to accept that it was multifaceted and unsettled (e.g. Barrett 2004, 215; Batey 2003, 66). The Norse who came to Scotland brought their building practices, subsistence strategies, rituals and social structures with them. The archaeological record contains the remains of farmsteads, communities, individual graves and larger cemeteries. These sites clearly demonstrate that Scandinavian Scotland was occupied by families, not armies or raiding parties. For instance, the Viking period of the cemetery at Westness, Orkney, includes the remains of men, women and children (Sellevold 1999). Although this was a period of movement, with settlers arriving in Scotland and moving to and from places like Ireland and Iceland, the

settlement of Northern and Western Scotland by emigrants from Scandinavia was essentially permanent, leaving marks on local languages, place names and cultural practices. Over time, the Scandinavian character of Scotland was moderated by the arrival of new populations, changes in leadership, and larger scale conflicts and exchanges between Scotland and Norway, but traces of this period remain, especially in the Northern Isles.

Migration, death and gender

A relatively recent area of research has focussed on the impact of migration on identity, with a number of authors suggesting that the act of migration has the power to change how individuals and communities perceive themselves (e.g. Crowder 2000, 451; Lyons 2000). These new identities are created, displayed, and enacted in many spheres of activity, not the least of which are those associated with death (e.g. Oliver 2004; Reimers 1999). Anthropological research has tended to focus on recent migrations, but there have been some explorations of ancient migrants and funerary practices. López Castro argues that Phoenician colonists tended to reproduce their own way of life in their new homes, including through traditional mortuary practices (2006, 76). He remarks, however, that hybridisation between indigenous and imported practices occurred quickly within the burial record (2006, 84). A similar study by Lyons (2000) examines gendered burial rites in Colonial Sicily, noting that although indigenous burial practices continued alongside imported Greek burial rituals, elements of Greek material culture were adopted into the local grave good assemblages. Intriguingly, Lyons identifies the presence of indigenous men and women, and immigrant men, but immigrant women are conspicuously absent in her evidence (2000, 101). Although she discusses the funerary evidence for marriage between indigenous women and immigrant men, there is no real analysis of how this might have affected the overall structure of society and the relationships between men and women. Significantly, the funerary practices for both indigenous males and females of seemingly higher status show the adoption of imported material culture, but no mention is made of evidence for hybridisation within the 'Greek' funerary tradition.

It is unsurprising that funerary practices can become catalysts for the creation of new identities. Williams (2006, 26) argues that early medieval funerals were essentially performative (see also Halsall 2003):

Communities were very much treating death as a performance, using death as a changing 'stage' upon which to express their identities and connections with the dead, the ancestors, the sacred and the past in general. Simultaneously, attempts were being made to construct aspirations for the future, both for the dead in the hope of achieving a final destination in an afterlife and for the living in affirming their land, possessions and resources.

If this is indeed the case, then it can be anticipated that burial rituals would be more fluid than has previously been assumed. This would be particularly true in a

migrant community, where the settlers are faced with new challenges, new ideas and beliefs, and new environments. The funerary rituals that emerge in such a setting would have to address the needs of a society in flux. This includes establishing identities and claims to land and resources, but also remembering home and the people who came before.

Gender, as a field of reference for identity, is understandably complicated. It can be argued that gender identities are one of the basic structuring principles of many societies, including those of Viking-Age Scandinavia and the areas into which they expanded (e.g. Dommasnes 1982; 1991; Hadley 2008; 2010; Hayeur Smith 2003a; 2003b; Moen 2011, 3). This said, gender is not a passive reflection of a biological reality. Rather, it is caught up in social practices and beliefs, often becoming part of the performance of life and death (Sofaer and Stig Sørensen 2013, 527). One of the most obvious arenas for gendered display in the archaeological record is within the grave. Material culture has long been used to inform assumptions about gender identities, sometimes being conflated with biological sex and sometimes being treated in isolation. Within this paper, gender is understood to be influenced by, but not necessarily determined by, biological sex. This provides space in which to be open to alternative gender possibilities. However, because the skeletal material in Scotland tends to be poor, there have been few opportunities to contrast the treatment of the dead with the nature of their bones.

It is widely believed that burial practices offer insight into social identities, although there are many caveats (see Maldonado, this volume). If we see funerary ritual as representing not the reality of life, but perhaps some ideal of it, then examining burials in a migrant context becomes even more poignant. Burial ritual may then become a sort of window into social expectations and aspirations for men and women, suggesting to us what people thought they should be doing in their new communities. For those living in Scandinavian Scotland, it is reasonable to assume that funerary practices were connected to components of identity perceived to be crucial in the context of the newly settled landscape, and that elements of traditional practices imported from Scandinavia would have been common.

Masculinity and femininity in the graves of Scandinavian Scotland

This analysis is based on the Scottish portion of a larger dataset, consisting of Viking-Age graves from northern and western Norway, Scotland and Iceland (Halstad McGuire 2010a). The present data includes 108 individuals in 101 graves from 58 different sites across Scandinavian Scotland. The data was gleaned from published and unpublished reports of excavations from the antiquarian period to 2008 (the full catalogue of graves included in this study can be found in Halstad McGuire 2010a). For the purposes of data analysis, sex was only assigned to an individual where this could be demonstrated by osteological analyses; this resulted in 14 males and 13 females. Gender was assigned based on the grave goods found with each individual (following Hayeur Smith 2003a

and Solberg 1985), resulting in 32 males and 30 females. When discriminant analysis was used to check the gender assignments with the sex of the skeletons there was a high level of correspondence (80%). Of the 27 sexed skeletons, seven were found to lack gendered grave goods and thus were assigned to the unknown gender category. Finally, it was possible to assign an age category to 30 individuals (Fig. 4.1). A further 11 were identified only as adults. Only two individuals fell into the adult (18–35) category, but this may be a reflection of how the age categories were assigned and the lack of recording for age estimations in many site reports.

The larger dataset was subjected to multivariate statistical analysis (discriminant analysis, factor analysis, and cluster analysis). These tests suggested the presence of gender- and age-based patterning in grave goods. Factor analysis was used to examine which artefact types tended to appear in groups. The results indicated the presence of gendered assemblages, including the association of oval brooches with other types of adornment and textile tools, and weapons with knives, axes, strike-a-lights, etc. Of the seven clusters produced by cluster analyses of graves and grave goods, only two appeared to lack any gendering in the artefact clusters. Members of two clusters were buried with oval brooches, other types of adornment, and textile tools; based on evidence in Scotland and elsewhere, it seems reasonable to identify these as female graves. The remaining three clusters all contained weapons. These apparently masculine clusters could be distinguished from one another by the presence of other artefacts, such as one cluster where the members were buried with things such as combs and strike-a-lights, and another where the members had belt fittings and axes. Not surprisingly, with one exception (discussed below), all juveniles fell into the genderless clusters. Children's graves are relatively uncommon in the Viking Age (Callow 2006, 58), and generally speaking, the grave goods tend to be markedly fewer. Perhaps more notable, however, is that the majority of mature and older adults also fall into the genderless clusters (see Halstad McGuire 2010a for a detailed discussion).

Case studies

With over a hundred graves in Scandinavian Scotland, it was necessary to identify a selection for closer examination (Fig. 4.2, Fig. 4.3). Sites were selected on the basis of publically accessible records, and where possible, complete excavation reports. This included concentrating on sites with reasonable levels of preservation and

	Age range	Count
Infant/Child	0–12	8
Young adult	13–17	2
Adult	18–35	2
Mature adult	36–45	7
Old adult	46+	11
Unknown adult	18+	11
Unknown		66

Fig. 4.1: Age categories and number of individuals in each category (after Halstad McGuire 2010a, 94).

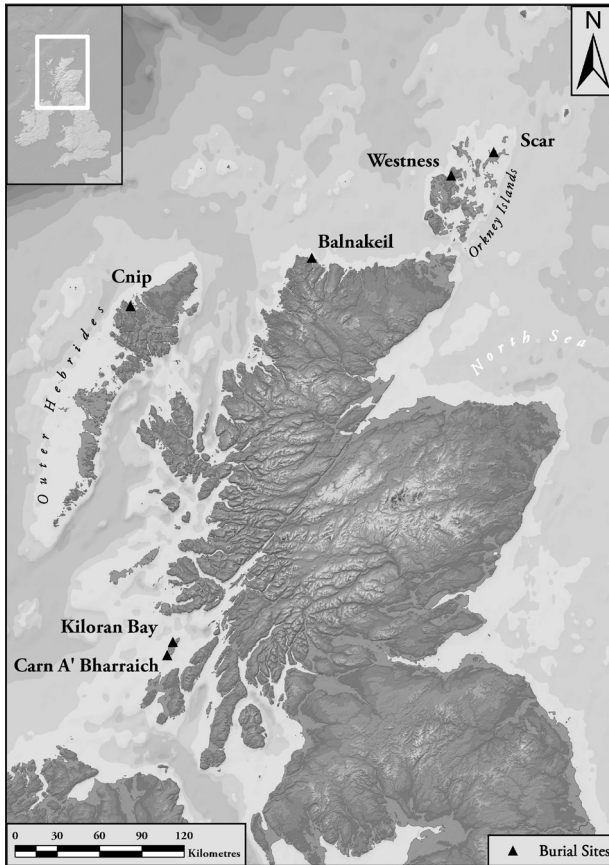


Fig. 4.2: Case study sites (map by Ryan K. McNutt).

available photographs or plans. Because the primary approach is through material culture, sites were also selected on the basis of the number and range of grave inclusions.

One of the most famous Viking graves in Scotland was discovered in 1991 at Scar, on the north end of Burness in Sanday. The grave site was located in a low cliff, on the exposed north face of the bay, facing out towards the Atlantic. Within the grave rested the remains of an older woman, a man and a young child, carefully laid out in a 7 m boat (Owen and Dalland 1999). Although the burial was radiocarbon dated to AD 875–950, the grave goods and the ritual practices evident here harken back to earlier decades and to Norway rather than Scotland (Owen and Dalland 1999). For these reasons, I have suggested

elsewhere that this grave may have been the product of funerary rituals designed, at least in part, to create and display migrant identities (Halstad McGuire 2010a, 192; 2010b, 178). Multiple burials are rare, however, and so more information is likely to be gleaned from looking at individual graves.

Being male in Scandinavian Scotland

Fourteen graves have skeletons that have been identified as likely male and 32 have grave goods typically associated with males. Of this collection, several graves stand out because of their levels of preservation and their impressive assemblages; three in particular are valuable to examine in the context of masculinity and warrior imagery.

The Pictish and Viking cemetery from Westness, Rousay, Orkney, was excavated between 1968 and 1984 (Kaland 1993). The Viking graves at Westness are significant

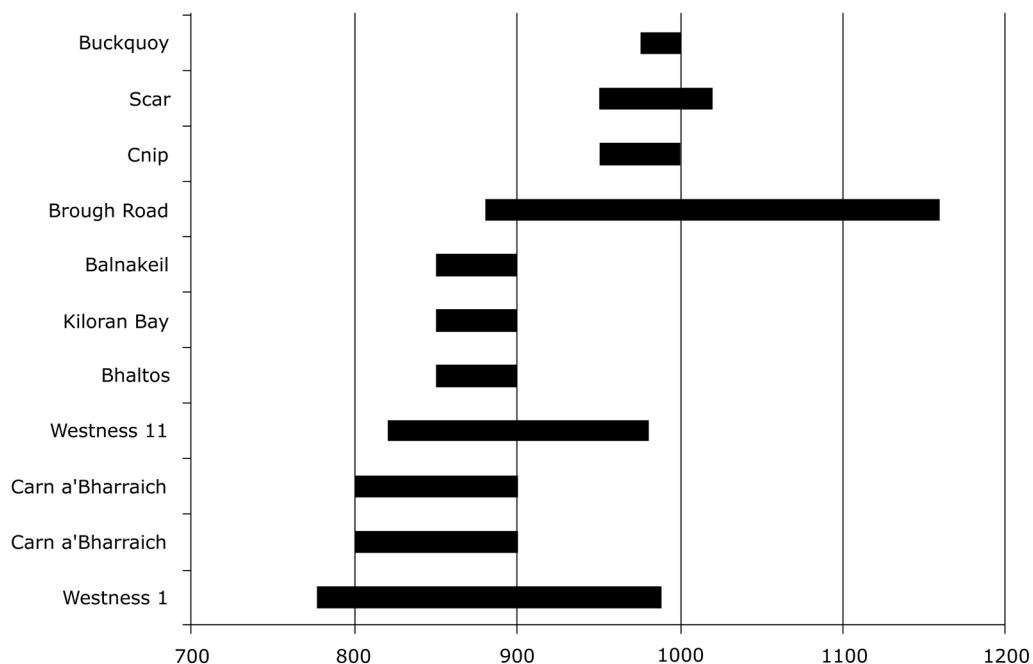


Fig. 4.3: Approximate date ranges for graves, based on combined artefacts and radiocarbon dates where possible.

for a number of reasons. First, prior to the Viking arrival, the cemetery has the appearance of a typically Pictish family cemetery; the Norse appear to have co-opted it for their own use, possibly laying claim to the landscape both physically and spiritually (Halstad McGuire 2010a, 212). Second, the presence of women and children from the Viking Age in this cemetery is indicative of settlement, rather than the movement of raiding parties or military units, as at Repton, Derbyshire (see Kjølbye-Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle 1992). Among the eight furnished Viking-Age graves are two boat-burials containing the remains of adult males and numerous weapons. Stable isotope analysis indicates that two of the males, both buried with weapons, emigrated from central or northern Norway (Montgomery *et al.* 2014, 64, graves 11, 12), suggesting that there may have been members of a warrior elite among the families. Finally, the continuation of W-E (head to west) unfurnished burial practices after the influx of 'pagan' burials may be indicative of a continued Pictish presence.

Examining one of the Westness boat graves, we find the remains of a tall adult male (45–55 years), who suffered from arthritis and dental disease (Sellekvold 1999, grave 11). He was buried lying on his back with his legs slightly flexed, and alongside his body was a sword, a damaged shield boss, arrowheads, a spear, an axe, a large whetstone, a knife, fire-starting tools, a sickle and an adze (Graham-Campbell and

Paterson forthcoming; Kaland 1993, 316; handlist held by the National Museum of Scotland). His single piece of adornment was a bronze pin. The other boat-burial looked much the same, except in this case the arrowheads were not grave goods, but rather cause of death: they were found embedded in the remains (Sellevold 1999, 25, grave 34), underscoring the possibility that the Viking presence in Scotland was not unchallenged. Both boat-burials belong to the late ninth or early tenth century (Sellevold 1999, 7), contemporary with the Scar burial. Although these are not likely to be the earliest Viking settlers in Scotland, it appears that the burial practices used for some members of their generation are deliberately Scandinavian, and possibly pagan, in nature.

It is unusual to find boat-burials like the Westness finds within a non-Viking cemetery. Within the Iron Age hillfort at Balladoole, Isle of Man, there are a large number of early Christian burials. At the entrance to the cemetery is a Viking burial: a man in a boat, with weapons and both human and animal sacrifice (Wilson 2008, 39). This grave is performatively pagan – it not only dominates the cemetery, but also overlays and disturbs earlier cist graves. Balladoole, and other similar burials, may have demonstrated Viking authority in the local context (Wilson 2008, 46), and the presence of Viking boat-burials in Westness might be interpreted in a similar fashion (Halstad McGuire 2010a, 267).

However, where Balladoole might represent an attack directed towards the local population and their collective memories of ancestors (Tarlow 1997; Williams 2006, 174), at Westness we find no comparable disturbance. Indeed, during the period of Viking burial at Westness, we see what might be a continuation of Christian practice. There are five W–E unfurnished burials (graves 9, 17, 18, 21, 26), including one infant, three adult males, and one adult female (Halstad McGuire 2010a, 214–16). Given the continuity of practice and the lack of disturbance of earlier graves, we might consider the possibility of intermarriage, or at least co-habitation, between native Orcadians and the incoming Norse settlers. If we accept that the unfurnished burials represent a continuation of a native, Christian population, it raises the possibility that it was culturally acceptable to continue Christian burial alongside ‘pagan’ funerals in the Westness community. The alternative explanation is that these were not local individuals at all, but settlers who did not receive furnished burial, as sometimes seen elsewhere in the Viking world. Unfortunately, we currently lack isotopic analysis of these graves and so this remains unknown. Regardless of the relationship between Norse and native in Westness, it is worth noting that for some members of the community, furnished burial, including both weapons burial and boat-burial, remained a significant component in the performance of identity among the settlers.

In the Western Isles of Scotland, another man was buried in a boat at Kiloran Bay, Colonsay. This grave was first excavated in 1882 and subjected to reanalysis in 2005, thus precise details of the remains may not be certain. When he died in the late ninth century, this man was over 40 years of age (Bill 2005). In addition to the boat, he was

buried with a horse and associated gear, a sword, a shield, arrows, an axe, a spear, knives, a whetstone, several Anglo-Saxon coins, trading equipment, and various other items. He also had personal adornment in the form of a silver Hiberno-Norse ringed pin, a bronze pin and a bronze buckle (Bill 2005, 348; Grieg 1940, 49).

The burial was in the bay area, with the sea approximately 180m to the north (Bill 2005, 347): ships sailing from the north to Ireland would potentially sail past the site, much the way that ships coming from Norway to Orkney may have passed by Scar. The presence of a substantial boat-burial with a possible stone setting could have made it visible to those at sea, thereby making it a part of the seascape/landscape. An unavoidable question with this particular grave is whether the man was resident in the area, or merely passing through. As is typical with Scandinavian Scotland, there is little evidence for contemporary settlement nearby, although there are other Viking burials, such as Machrins and Cnoc Nan Gall (see Ritchie 1981). The stone setting also seems to have incorporated two knife-incised cross-marked stones. It is impossible for us to know who made the crosses or when. On the one hand, they may have been made at the time of burial as part of a syncretic practice, combining both Christian and pagan symbolism. Alternatively, they could have been made later, perhaps providing a posthumous conversion or even a means to Christianise a pagan place. Indeed, it has recently been suggested that the cross-marked stones were never part of the original grave (Ritchie 2012, 444). Regardless of when or why the crosses were added, this warrior-style grave formed part of the memorial landscape, forging a visible connection between the Vikings, their homelands, and the local culture of the Scottish Isles.

One of the most compelling masculine burials discovered in Scotland emerged from the sand dunes at Balnakeil Bay, near Durness, Sutherland in 1991. The young man, buried here sometime between AD 850 and 900, was probably only 12–13 years old at the time of his death (Batey and Paterson 2013, 637). In spite of his youth, he was buried with an array of weapons similar to those seen at both Westness and Kiloran Bay. In addition to a sword, shield, spearhead, and knife, his grave goods included tools and personal items, such as those common in other Viking graves (Batey and Paterson 2013, 634). His adornment included a penannular brooch, a simple bronze pin, and three beads. Male burials tend to have a single bead, if any; multiple beads are more commonly associated with females. The bronze pin was found on his head and likely served as a shroud pin. Among his supplies was a needle case and needles – such objects are found with adult females and a very few children (Batey and Paterson 2013, 648; Gräslund 1973, 174). Batey and Paterson (2013) have suggested the presence of bedding of some sort, on the basis of traces of feathers. Finally, the young man had a bag of game pieces buried with him, possibly part of a *tafl* set. Board games, although not the exclusive purview of the elite, can be associated with elite ideals relating to leisure, strategy, and power (Caldwell, Hall and Wilkinson 2009, 176–77). Where game pieces appear in graves, they tend to be with adult males buried with weapons, as at Scar (Owen and Dalland 1999, 127) and Westness (Kaland 1993, 313).

The point at which a Viking child becomes an adult is not something that we can know for certain, although later law codes from Iceland would suggest that this may have been twelve, at least for males (*Grágás* K20, 53; see also Stoodley 2000, who identifies a similar age threshold among Anglo-Saxon males). So it is possible that the Balnakeil boy is better identified as the Balnakeil man (Batey and Paterson 2013, 653–54). Although he was young, he may well have been a warrior, as suggested by his weaponry, or at least entitled to the status symbolised by that weaponry. His weapons are all of types found with adults, however there are some intriguing aspects of the weapon assemblage that we might consider further. Type H swords are among the most ubiquitous of the period and this one lacks the inlay commonly associated with the type (Batey and Paterson 2013, 640). Although the ritual deposition of *any* sword represents a sacrifice of resources, this one may not have been a particularly expensive sacrifice, comparatively, especially as it was damaged prior to burial. The spearhead belonged to a light throwing spear, possibly of Insular manufacture (Batey and Paterson 2013, 643). It may be that the lighter blade was more suitable for a youngster. This is not to suggest the weapons lacked value or that they were unimportant within the context of the ritual. Rather, the possibility is that the symbolism of the weapons was of greater importance than the material quality of the weapon.

The burial was discovered eroding from a sand dune at the north end of Balnakeil Bay. Batey and Paterson (2013, 656–57) suggest that the area may have been more active in the Viking Age than previously assumed and that this bay could have provided important shelter for those travelling along trade routes to the Irish Sea. It is unknown whether there was an above-ground marker and thus we cannot be certain as to whether or not the grave formed part of the visible landscape. In spite of this, we might propose that the funeral and the resulting grave became a part of the memorial landscape of Balnakeil, helping to create and define the Norse presence in Scotland. The burial of the well-armed young man in this location may have linked him and his family to both land and sea. Laid out as a warrior, he can be seen to ‘claim’ the land. There is, of course, a certain amount of ambiguity with this grave because of the inclusion of multiple beads, sewing equipment and feathers – was he a man, or a child on the cusp of manhood? It may not have entirely mattered at the time that he was buried. Those who survived him buried him as a warrior, laying claim to whatever that identity entailed for him and for his family, in a landscape newly settled.

Being female in Scandinavian Scotland

Identifying potential case studies for female graves proved more problematic. Of the most well-known female graves, only Scar (the multiple burial mentioned above), Cnip A (excavated in 1979), and Westness 1 (disturbed by a farmer in 1963) are relatively recent and have significant levels of publication. Three other female graves from Westness are

also known (graves 3, 5, 36), but less information is currently available regarding these individuals. The majority of the remaining female graves from Scotland are poorly preserved or heavily disturbed and cannot be analysed in depth.

An accidental discovery in 1979 uncovered a small Viking-Age cemetery at Cnip, Uig, Lewis in association with a Bronze Age cairn. The location of the cemetery is relatively common for Viking burial in Scotland: it was placed on a headland, overlooking the beach and in conjunction with an earlier monument (Dunwell *et al.* 1995, 720; see Leonard 2011 for a discussion of the linkage between prehistoric monuments and Viking burial in Orkney). Although there is strong Norse place-name evidence throughout the Western Isles, settlement locations are rare, and none have been definitively identified near Cnip (see Armit 1994 for some as yet unexplored possibilities). There were several adults and a few infants within the cemetery. The richest grave of the site is a female comparable to those from Westness (Cnip A). The woman was in her late thirties at the time of her death and she was accompanied by a range of grave goods, including a pair of oval brooches, 44 glass beads, a bronze Hiberno-Norse ringed pin, tools (textile and agricultural), and a decorated bronze belt buckle and strap-end (Welander *et al.* 1987).

Several of the artefacts stand out. The oval brooches were mismatched and worn. They likely date to the late ninth or early tenth century. The ringed pin, on the other hand, belongs to the late tenth or early eleventh century. The Cnip belt buckle and strap-end are equally intriguing, being rare finds in women's graves in the Viking world. A strap-end in the same style as the Cnip strap-end was discovered in Kroppur, Eyjafjarðarsýsla, Iceland although the grave lacked oval brooches (Hayeur Smith 2003a; 2003b). It has been suggested that the women from Cnip and Kroppur were of a mixed Scandinavian/Insular descent (Hayeur Smith 2003b), or had another strong connection to the islands. Stable isotope evidence further supports this hypothesis, as the Cnip woman has been identified as local to the area in which she was buried (Montgomery *et al.* 2003, 650–51). This means that she likely grew up in or around Cnip (or in another area with a similar isotopic signature), but what we do not know is whether her parents or spouse were local as well, or immigrants from some other area. It seems reasonable to suppose that any one of them could have come from Scandinavia. This raises interesting questions with regards to migrant communities – how many generations does it take to become local and can we see this in the archaeological record? This is an issue to which we will return below.

Discovered in 1963 at the base of a standing stone, the first Viking grave uncovered at Westness contained the remains of a woman and infant (grave 1). Based on the available data, it has been suggested that they died during, or shortly after, childbirth (Graham-Campbell and Batey 1998, 136). A large number of grave goods accompanied the burial, including the traditional paired oval brooches, 40 glass beads, Anglo-Saxon strap ends, a recycled book-mount brooch, a comb and a range of textile tools, including an iron weaving sword (a rather uncommon find in Viking Scotland). The most famous artefact from this grave is the Westness brooch. This gilt silver brooch has gold filigree

and inlaid amber and was likely made in Ireland one hundred years before it was buried (Stevenson 1989, 265). There are many ways in which the inclusion of an early Irish brooch in a Viking woman's grave can be interpreted (whether the woman was buried in Scotland or in Norway). Did she wear it in life or only in death and what might it have meant to her and her community? Perhaps she was Irish and it was an heirloom. Alternatively, the brooch may have come to Viking Orkney as an object of trading or raiding. Either way, the wearing of the Westness brooch could be read as a statement (deliberate or otherwise) regarding the relationship between the Viking settlers and the varied populations of the British Isles. Alongside the more widely discussed brooch was a smaller one, made from what was once likely an Insular book mount. In a recent discussion of re-purposed Insular metalwork in Viking contexts, Sheehan (2013) proposed that there was a connection between the metalwork and Scandinavian gift-exchange processes. As is discussed below, this brooch may play a role in displaying prestige for the deceased, and perhaps more significantly, for her family.

A range of evidence suggests that Viking men married women from diverse backgrounds. The sagas tell us that Viking men in Scotland had access to both local women and women from home (Hayeur Smith 2003b, 238). The presence of Scandinavian women may be supported by the presence of imported artefacts in female grave assemblages. Although it is true that artefacts do not necessarily equal an ethnic identity (Hadley 2002, 46; Halsall 2000, 270), when the majority of the artefacts are imported from Norway, as with Scar, then it seems likely that there is a strong connection. Isotopic data suggests that at least a few of the women are immigrants, but not always from where we might expect. The woman from grave E at Cnip and the woman from grave 5 at Westness were both identified as having emigrated from either Ireland, North Yorkshire, or eastern Scotland (Montgomery *et al.* 2003, 650–51; Montgomery *et al.* 2014, 64). In both instances, these women's graves were much simpler than their counterparts discussed above. While Westness 5 was buried with a knife, comb, two spindle whorls and a penannular brooch (Handlist held by the National Museum of Scotland), Cnip E had only an unidentified iron plate and small bone pin (Dunwell *et al.* 1995, 719–52). Because we do not know exactly what determines the number and nature of grave goods, it is difficult to speculate why these women have fewer grave goods than those discussed above. On the one hand, it may be that as outsiders, they have a lower social status in their respective communities. On the other hand, it is possible that the traditions from their own homelands tended to include fewer grave goods.

Gender in an immigrant landscape

What did it mean to be a man in Scandinavian Scotland? For some men, it would seem that masculinity was closely connected to the appearance of martial prowess. Halsall (2003, 33) suggests that wealthy weapons burials may be indicative of competition between households, something that might be expected in a settler landscape. We

cannot know for certain if these men ever *used* the weapons in their grave assemblages. Härke (2004) convincingly argues that Anglo-Saxon weapon burials relate to aspects of identity, rather than military actions. While this may be true in terms of day to day life, it is still important to acknowledge the function of weapons as implements of killing (Hedenstierna-Jonson 2006, 23–24), as well as symbols for more esoteric social ideals. Regardless, the people who buried these men made deliberate choices about the contents of their graves, creating the image of a well-armed warrior. Nearly one-third of all Viking burials in Scotland contained weapons, of these 22 had swords – perhaps the most expensive and personal form of weapon. In 11 instances, there was only a single weapon present in the grave, and five of these were swords. Moreover, 11 of the 14 skeletons that were sexed as male were buried with some form of armament. Although the sample size is small, we see two-thirds of the males given some form of weapons burial – two-thirds of the males are connected through their funerals to a warrior identity.

Weapons are not the only components in the creation of masculine funerary identities. The men buried in these graves also carried with them adornment in the forms of brooches and pins and personal effects such as combs and knives. Several of the men went to their graves with gaming pieces. Perhaps these were meant to while away the time in Valhalla, or perhaps they were part of the informal strategic and mental training taken up by military elites across Medieval Europe (Kimball 2013, 70). The inclusion of subsistence tools, such as farming/hunting equipment and cooking utensils, highlights the importance of self-sufficiency and the maintenance of particular ways of life brought from Scandinavia. A warrior was not simply a soldier – he could also be a farmer, hunter, trader, and/or the head of his household. Sayer (2010) proposes that the most well-furnished burials in each generation of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery represent the burials of heads of households. While the generational evidence for Scandinavian Scotland is made substantially more difficult to assess because of the rarity of cemetery burial, it stands to reason that as in Sayer's examples, wealthy burials may be indicative of powerful families, as well as powerful members of those families. Funerary display may have been a part of the social competition in the contested landscape of Scandinavian Scotland.

The age range for these individuals spans from adolescence to old adults. Among the eldest, arthritis, healed wounds, and dental disease were prevalent – none of these conditions appear to have been substantial enough to inhibit combat skills. While it may be easy to envision the older men as experienced warriors with past (and possibly current) glories to be celebrated during their funerals, the youngest individuals may be harder to explain. Was the Balnakeil grave the grave of an untested warrior, or had he already proven himself in battle? We cannot tell from the remains, but as noted above, it may not be entirely relevant. Whether a warrior was green or whether he was too old to take up his sword, in the context of Scandinavian Scotland, where relations with the local population were uncertain at best and where neighbours may be allies or competitors, certain kinds of masculinity were being emphasised.

Women's grave assemblages were more varied than men's in Scandinavian Scotland. The iconic oval brooches were certainly present, but not ubiquitous (24 graves of a potential 34 females had pairs of oval brooches). Where they did occur, they were sometimes old, worn, repaired or mismatched, as at Cnip. In rare instances, oval brooches were replaced with something different. The most notable example of this was at Carn a'Bharraich, Oronsay, where a woman was buried with a pair of recycled shrine mounts in the place of brooches (M'Neill 1891). A second female grave was added to this burial mound at a later date; her assemblage included a pair of matched oval brooches, which Grieg suggested were antiques at the time of burial (1940, 43). It may be that in the context of the migrant community in Scotland, where oval brooches were not produced locally, the symbolism associated with the brooches was deemed necessary to preserve. Hayeur Smith (2003a, 79) suggests that oval brooches in Icelandic graves may have served to set apart women of Scandinavian descent from those who came from the British Isles, taking on ethnic attributes (see Härke 2004 for a similar approach to swords in Anglo-Saxon burials). One possibility to consider for Scotland is that the identities of women who were first generation migrants may have been more secure than those of their daughters. This might explain why the Cnip woman, who was local to the area, was given such a demonstrably Scandinavian pagan burial, in contrast to all of the others in the cemetery. Although generational differences in migrant identities have not been explored in archaeological contexts, they are a frequent topic of anthropological and sociological research, where studies have found that in some immigrant communities tensions exist between generations, sometimes resulting in greater emphasis on ethnic identities by those born in the new communities (e.g. Waters 1994). We could consider the rather late Scar burial, for instance. It is possible that this distinctly Scandinavian burial represents a deliberate return to traditional practices, although it is important to remember that the woman at the heart of this burial was old at the time of her death and may therefore have been a first generation immigrant.

Children and older adults were less likely to have gendered burial, as noted above. It seems likely that identities connected to stages in the life-cycle were also at play. The entanglement of life-cycle, gender identity, and funerary practices has been explored by relatively few early-medieval archaeologists. Thedéen (2008) describes a series of transitions for females in Viking-Age Gotland, but her conclusions are based on very regionalised evidence and do not necessarily translate well to other parts of the Viking diaspora. Stoodley (1998; 2000) proposes that the apparent emphasis on gendered adults in the context of Anglo-Saxon England is connected to their history of migration. The implication of his conclusions is that adults who were capable of contributing to the next generation were the ones most likely to received gendered burials.

The gendering of adult burials was as important in Scotland as it was in Norway. Masculinity, although not limited to warrior-type imagery, was closely associated with it, albeit in different degrees between the regions studied (Halstad McGuire

2010a, 261). Feminine assemblages in Scotland were more diverse, but still stood out as distinctly female. In contrast, the contemporary Scandinavian presence in England vanished swiftly through acculturation, but warrior-like identities in early funerary practices are notable. Hadley (2008, 281) proposes that this is linked to the renegotiation of elite masculinities during and after conquest. Conquest, migration, and other dramatic social changes lead to disruptions in society and may cause periods of transition that threaten traditional practices, including gender roles (Halstad McGuire 2010a, 67, 261; Härke 2011, 104). The Viking response to such transitions during the Scandinavian expansion into Scotland, Iceland and elsewhere may have included the idealisation of certain traditional identities through funerary practices.

Repair, reuse, recycle: older artefacts in burials

In the ritual context of burial, one might expect to find only the best artefacts. In recent centuries, Western funerary traditions have involved dressing bodies in their best clothing, for instance. Why then do we sometimes find objects that are worn, broken, repaired, or old in Viking-Age burials? This is not unique to Scandinavian Scotland – indeed, Härke (2000) addresses the circulation and ritual deposition of weapons in Anglo-Saxon England, noting the occurrence of antiques in certain graves. Williams (1998, 96) suggests that there may be spiritual significance in the inclusion of ancient artefacts, perhaps linking individuals to ancestors or a mythical past. In Scandinavian Scotland, several artefacts are notably old at the time of burial. These include the famous brooch found in Westness grave 1, the equal-armed brooch and whalebone plaque from Scar, and the three sets of mismatched oval brooches found at Cnip, Bhaltos and Carn a'Bharraich, some of which displayed evidence of repair. The inclusion of older material in graves suggests that these objects held social significance, perhaps during the lifetime of the deceased, as well as during the funeral. This makes sense; according to Hayeur Smith (2003b, 228) jewellery, as an heirloom, is a 'connecting agent with one's ancestral group.' Indeed, whether we see older objects as heirlooms or as ties to a mythical past, the point is that they connect the living to ancestors, real or imagined. In connecting to ancestors, they may also be drawing on and recreating images of homeland.

A pair of shrine mounts that had been removed from an Insular house-shaped shrine were modified to serve as brooches and included in the woman's grave at Carn a'Bharraich. In the Westness 1 burial, there was a small brooch made from what may have been a book mount, while at Bhaltos there was a possible brooch made from a gilded circular mount. The recycling of metalwork as jewellery is well known from Viking contexts (e.g. Sheehan 2013; Wamers 1998). In some instances, Insular religious objects, such as shrines and books, appear to have formed the raw materials for recycled jewellery in both Norway and Scotland. Raiding seems like the most likely means of acquisition when the original material was ecclesiastical, as such objects were unlikely to have circulated through trade (Bakka 1965, 40; Halstad McGuire 2010,

165). Recently, Sheehan (2013, 820) proposed that Insular metalwork may have been specifically targeted by raiders for use in Scandinavian gift-exchange networks. He implied that the presence of this metalwork in women's burials in Norway may be indicative of its use as bride wealth. This could be equally true in other parts of the Viking diaspora.

Whilst it may be impossible to definitively ascribe motives to people in the past, it is tempting to speculate that the wearing of stolen material culture could have been both about the display of beautiful objects and the celebration of successful raiding activities. The women who wore these items of jewellery were unlikely to have been raiders themselves, but Ibn Fadlan's tenth-century chronicle *Risala* states that women displayed their husbands' wealth through adornment. This implies a passive role for women that may be unpalatable in current interpretations; nevertheless, it is worth exploring. Sayer (2010, 62) argues that furnished burials in early Anglo-Saxon England were more indicative of family identities, than individual ones. If we see Viking society as focusing not on the individual, but on the family, then it becomes possible for women to actively engage in the display of a family's place and social prestige through choices in jewellery.

The lay of the land

Proximity to water seems to have been the driving determinant of burial location in Scandinavian Scotland. Viking graves in both Norway and Iceland are associated with water, but also generally with settlements and farms. Of course, being near to water is somewhat inevitable in environments dominated by fjords and islands. However, in marked contrast to elsewhere, there appears to be a disconnect between contemporary settlements and burial sites in Scandinavian Scotland. Instead, graves and cemeteries are found associated with earlier man-made features and natural landscapes (Leonard 2011 notes the same general pattern where Viking Age settlements are associated with earlier ones). Many of the graves from Scotland are located in sand-dunes (e.g. Scar, Balnakeil, and Kiloran Bay), some in conjunction with small islands, eroding cliff faces and hills. Many burials are connected to earlier man-made sites, such as settlement mounds, middens, ancient cairns and cemeteries (Fig. 4.4). Although these sites could be deemed appropriate for disposal of the dead, either already being places of burial, or being otherwise conspicuous in the landscape, the decisions to use these sites may be more meaningful than functional. Convenience would suggest that they be placed in easily accessed locations, while tradition would require them to be placed in conjunction with a settlement. In some instances, burials are associated with pre-Viking settlements, rather than contemporary ones. Leonard (2011, 60) argues that the act of inserting a burial into a pre-existing settlement or monument serves to create mnemonic landmarks, connecting the settlers with their new landscape. Essentially, these funerals became part of the process of claiming Scandinavian Scotland, similar to

<i>Monument type.</i>	<i>Period(s)</i>	<i>Site name(s)</i>
Settlement mound	Pictish/Viking	Buckquoy
Broch	Iron Age	Gurness; Lambaness
Shell midden	Mesolithic	Carn a'Bharraich
Cairn	Bronze Age; Late Roman Iron Age; Pictish	Cnip; Brough Rd, Birsay
Cemetery	Pictish	Westness; Dunrobin

Fig. 4.4: Viking-Age burials associated with pre-existing man-made monuments.

the way that Thäte (2007, 277) has suggested that the reuse of burial mounds in Scandinavia legitimises claims of inheritance.

The reuse of ancient monuments in the early Middle Ages has been a topic of discussion for almost two decades (e.g. Driscoll 1998; Leonard 2011; Semple 1998; 2009; Thäte 2007; 2009; Williams 1998; see also Maldonado, this volume). Some of the core ideas that have emerged from these studies include seeing ancient monuments as tools to secure the power of ruling elites, legitimising claims to land, and linking people to ancestors and lineages (real or invented). Thäte (2007) argues that the reuse of monuments in Viking-Age Norway was central to the socio-political lives of landowners, whereby the use of ancient funerary mounds creates lineal links, while burial in settlements allows the taking over of a territory by an outsider. In a subsequent paper, Thäte (2009, 108) observes that many Viking-Age burials were associated with liminal spaces (high ground, water ways, etc), proposing that these choices emerged from a much wider phenomenon of near-death experiences. The implication of Thäte's research is thus: in Viking-Age Scandinavia, decisions about where to place a burial were embedded in worldviews that were both spiritual and secular. Religion and politics may have been deeply intertwined in Viking-Age funerary practices.

A funeral procession would have made a journey from some settlement to a prominent place in the landscape. A warrior may have been transported in, or accompanied by, a boat, his weapons and personal items, and some number of mourners. Textual sources from other parts of the early medieval world hint that the funeral was a spectacle, with singing, feasting, and various other dramatics (consider the funeral in *Beowulf*, the rules for cremation laid out by Óðinn in *Ynglinga* saga, and the description in Ibn Fadlan's *Risala*, for instance). In a few instances in Scotland, a horse might be sacrificed as part of the ritual (e.g. Kiloran Bay). This seems most likely to have been done near to the grave, as the animal would be large and heavy to shift once dead. Women's burials occur in the same places as men's, suggesting that they too would have had a funeral procession, with accompanying rituals. A procession of this nature would inevitably garner attention from anyone near enough to hear it coming, incomer and local alike and need not have been limited to the community in which the deceased had lived.

The spectacle of the funeral would become part of the collective memories of the witnesses (Williams 2005, 256). Bringing together practices from home and displays of power and identity, the funeral may thus become an agent for both competition and cooperation between groups of settlers.

With so many Viking-Age burials placed along Scottish waterways, in bays, and with prominent features, they must have made for a landscape/seascape peopled with memories of the dead. As established and later Viking settlers sailed down the coasts and along the isles, every monument they passed could have told a story about those who came before. Moreover, by associating their own dead with earlier monuments, the Vikings in Scotland may have been appropriating those spaces and stories for themselves. They would have made themselves a fundamental part of the landscape. Their reasons may have been spiritual, secular, or a combination of both. Were they passively re-enacting funerary rituals carried over from their homelands, consciously conquering the land by ‘conquering’ the dead (as per Thäte 2009), or creating imagined ancestral connections to earlier inhabitants (as per Williams 1998)? These are questions for which we cannot provide concrete answers, but such answers may not be completely necessary. Each of these interpretations leads to the same destination – the incorporation of the Scandinavian settlers into the Scottish Isles.

Conclusion

This paper began by suggesting that migration shapes people. The Viking-Age settlers who came to Scotland brought with them a set of ritual practices that continued to be used long after settlement. Furnished burials located in prominent locations are perceived to be one of the most recognisable features of this period in Scotland. Through these practices, the Vikings shaped the landscapes into which they settled, but over time, the rituals were also changed in subtle ways, as the settlers engaged with each other and with the local populations. An issue that was outwith the scope of this paper, but worth considering in the future, is the potential impact of contact with and conversion to Christianity. The settlers would have been exposed to Christian influences both in Scotland and increasingly from the Scandinavian homelands.

Gender was one of the most defining characteristics of funerary practices in Scandinavian Scotland. Gender identities for men and women had their roots in the homelands of the settlers, but were played out in an environment where ownership of land may have been disputed. As such, they became both idealised and dramatised, with warrior rites being central to the display of masculinity. In a few instances, the inclusion of weapons was emphasised, even if it is not certain that the deceased would have actively engaged in armed conflict. Even in death, the land was being aggressively claimed. Although there are rare instances of Viking women’s burials with weapons, none are known from Scotland. Instead, the women buried in the Scottish landscape were buried as Scandinavian women, wearing jewellery imported from their homelands (old and repaired, in some cases) or recycled from valuable Insular objects.

Perhaps oval brooches and their substitutes were curated, worn, and eventually placed in graves as a means to maintain ties to ancestors, not just for the individual women, but as part of reiteration and communication of family identities. By continuing traditions imported from Scandinavia, the settlers may have been actively declaring their identities to each other as well as to any persisting local populations.

Finally, this paper has highlighted the importance of landscape choices and monument reuse in Scandinavian Scotland. It appears that the settlers broke with the tradition of associating burials with settlements, in favour of traditions of burial along waterways or in conjunction with older sites. This may, however, be a reflection of circumstances of archaeological discovery and therefore any conclusions drawn from this pattern are necessarily tentative. The locations selected for burial allow for a continuation of practices that may be connected with belief in access to the supernatural, but they also make visible statements about the presence of settlers within the natural and ritual landscapes of the Scottish Isles. The processions, funerals, and monuments may have worked together to inscribe memories of individuals in the minds of the living, both settler and local. Conducting Scandinavian funerary rituals for men and women in places like Pictish cemeteries could simultaneously declare the appropriation of space and the continuation of tradition. Thus, they enable the settlers to create connections to their (imagined) homelands, while asserting the permanence of their place in Scotland.

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Chapter 5

Smoke and Mirrors: Conjuring the Transcendental Subject

John L. Creese

(North Dakota State University, john.creese@ndsu.edu)

Abstract

Theories of identity may seem to offer the archaeologist a stark choice. On the one hand, representational approaches examine how people actively present or portray themselves using material culture. Expression and self-determination are emphasized, occasionally in a way that falsely universalizes the values and assumptions of liberal individualism. Relational-affective approaches, on the other hand, explore how identity emerges within historically-particular networks of social ties and material relationships. Here, structure and context are emphasized, occasionally in a manner that threatens to dissolve the knowing subject. Representational and relational approaches, however, need not be opposed. They capture distinct but ultimately interdependent sides of the identity-production coin. In order to examine this dialectic more closely, I take a look at a non-western mode of personal identification and its materialization in an unusual artifact – the effigy smoking pipe. Effigy pipes were commonly made and used by the Iroquoian people of Late Precontact and early Historic eastern North America, probably to conjure beings known to them as *oki*. The effective use of effigy pipes by Iroquoian ritualists arguably depended on a unique balance between relational and representational dimensions of identification.

Keywords: *Identification, personhood, Northern Iroquoians, smoking pipes, Eastern North America*

Introduction

[The self] reflects itself to itself from out of that to which it has given itself over.

Heidegger 1982, 161

This chapter is not about defining identity, or describing the material correlates of specific identity categories. Instead, it asks a deceptively simple question: *what is accomplished by identifying practices, not only for the group or class being defined, but especially for the subject?* In short, my wish is to examine how subjectivities emerge in practices of identification.

In pursuit of answers, I draw a heuristic contrast between *representational* and *relational-affective* modes of identification. These modes of identification constitute the subject differently according to the characteristic relationships that are prominent in a given historical context. In societies where a Cartesian ego-subject is predominant, identification is dominated by the representational mode; where subjects are understood as partible, distributed, or dividual (e.g. Fowler 2004; Gell 1998; Strathern 1988), relational-affective modes of identification are prominent. However, both forms of identification occur in most societies, and are in fact interdependent – a point I shall elaborate on below. Thus, from an archaeological perspective, the nature of the social institutions that predominate in a specific context will have implications for the kinds of subjects and identification practices that are promoted. In what follows, I consider the role of representational and relational-affective modes of identification in structuring late pre-contact and early contact era Native North American subjectivities through an analysis of the Iroquoian effigy pipe phenomenon.

Effigy smoking pipes, made of clay or stone, depicted certain animal, anthropomorphic, and skeumorphic entities. In the act of being smoked, these objects lived ‘dual lives’, for they involved both representational and relational-affective modes of identification. On the one hand, effigy images served to define and reify a transcendental ego-subject. On the other, they married this reifying action with an experience of inter-subjective bodily exchange and affective attachment. Pipe effigies reflexively produced an experience of the inner self – glossed by Iroquoians as the ‘affectionate soul’ (or *gonennoncwal* in Wendat) – whose desires required satisfaction for the maintenance of physical health (Thwaites 1896–1900 [vol. 10], 141).

However, the representational modes of identification evident in effigy pipes were deployed not to define a ‘free subject’ in the modern western sense, but to facilitate social attachments within a wider relational field. Here, the body – and especially the face and its orifices – was problematized as a focus for affective exchange aimed at promoting physical and emotional wellbeing. Native tobacco, with its addictive and dissociative properties, was consumed *via* representations of cosmological others (cf. Helms 2004) with whom the smoker exchanged breath. These practices were aimed at conditioning an experience of transcendence in which the self ‘reflects itself to itself from out of that to which it has given itself over’ (Heidegger 1982, 161).

From representation to attachment

Identity is often discussed as an object of performance, to be actively deployed, resisted, or appropriated (e.g. Bowser 2000). Long gone are the cultural essentialisms and biological determinisms of the last century; identities are nowadays widely proclaimed to be constructed in practice (Pauketat and Alt 2005; Stovel 2005), individually negotiated, situational, fluid, multi-scalar, multi-dimensional, and hybrid (Emberling 1997; 1999; Jones 1997; MacEachern 2001). In short, we have become accustomed to the idea that agents are the strategic producers and consumers of identities (cf. Spivak 1988).

This emphasis on identity as performative, however, depends to a certain extent on the notion of an actor lurking behind the mask. Such a model draws on deep convictions held by most of us that identification involves evaluations of surface likeness that provide evidence of a hidden or invisible inner reality (cf. Strathern 1999). In this view, which I term representational, identities are located in, and assessed through, the forms by which selves represent themselves. In contemporary Euro-American societies, such self-representations are intuitively interpreted according to genre conventions that are drawn upon in any given act – such as a man's decision to wear a tie to a job interview. In such a mode, actions are approached as something to be interpreted – signs of something that exists before and beyond them, *viz.* the agent behind the signs.

Archaeological theory has not escaped this mode of thought. Ironically, in seeking to overcome the agency-structure dichotomy, agency theorists have altered but ultimately reproduced the terms of the debate. The agent emerges from structuration (Giddens 1984) more powerful (analytically) than before. She is no longer an absolute master of her condition, nor a cultural dope, but is rather bifurcated internally between an essential agency, and various inculcated dispositions toward structural identity norms embodied in the *habitus* (Bourdieu 1977). The fundamental quality of the subject – her agency – is her internal authenticity, the essence of the universal subject standing somehow beyond the conditions of her worldly engagement. While agency theory has been invaluable for recasting identity as generated in practice (and therefore always in a state of becoming) archaeologists have been timid when it comes to examining the full implications of recursive structuration for the 'becoming' of the subject. The result is that identity continues to be understood as a representation formed at the interface of the mental and the material – a surface likeness, projected outwards by an inner intending agent. Internal:external and signified:sign dichotomies remain, recapitulated within the contemporary archaeological model of the 'agent'.

If the reasons why this construction is problematic are not immediately apparent, it is because we have taken our own culturally-specific concept of identification to be a universal process. But just as the construction of the subject as a rational 'free man', an *individual* in the modern Western sense, is an historical product of the European

enlightenment (Knapp and van Dommelen 2008; Thomas 2004), so too is the idea that identity is something that such an individual – more or less authentically, situationally, or strategically – constructs as a representation of an unseen inner self. Indeed, it is this very representationalist paradigm of identification that, in a sense, ‘conjures up’ a transcendental Cartesian ego.

Yet this representationalist mode of identification is not the only one, nor the most fundamental. Marilyn Strathern has drawn a useful distinction between the way Euro-Americans and Melanesians understand and read identity from specific practices. The Euro-American paradigm of identification is to be found in the way we read portraits: ‘the individualized Euro-American person is recognizable in the individualized body, with its unique characteristics, especially of the face [...] The notion of portrait draws on this convention insofar as a principal medium is precisely the individual’s bodily features’ (Strathern 1999, 32). Group identities in the west simply take this model and scale it up, so that the identification of a gender, or class, or institutional role, is conventionally located in the likenesses they share, interpreted as signs of an inner quality.

In Mt. Hagen, Papua New Guinea, by contrast, Strathern (1999) observes that the performance of individual identity in men’s public dances is not asserted through any overt material distinctions of their movements or regalia. The regalia also do not distinguish wider identity categories such as clan membership or political offices. Rather, the dancer’s appearance and especially his feather headdress stand as an index of his ability to effectively compose the regalia by activating a complex network of relationships: ‘it is in the relationships that a man gathers to himself that his individuality lies; the accomplishments that bring a person a ‘name’ come from holding persons together’ (Strathern 1999, 39). Representationalist expectations of an external:internal, sign:signified relation fail here in spite of the fact that the dance is central to Hagen men’s self-identity. Identification in Mt. Hagen depends on reading the feather regalia not according to genre conventions of self-representation, but as a literal document of the wearer’s enabling relationships. For the Hager, the self is realized through those relationships, and is amplified and expanded through their extension. So the basic operation of identification at work in Mt. Hagen is not self-expression in a representationalist mode, but self-identification through the articulation and assembly of materially-mediated social relationships, a mode of identification I shall call *relational-affective*.

Relational-affective identification, therefore, describes the capacity of objects and practices to become entangled with an individual’s personal identity through processes of emotional, substantial, and bodily engagement. This is the kind of identification, for instance, that’s at work when we keep the shirt or shoes of a deceased loved one – not because it signaled his or her identity in an overt way, but because of the history of intimate bodily engagements it had with its wearer.

This mode of identification is broadly coherent with relational social theories in vogue in certain theoretical camps today (e.g. DeLanda 2006; Ingold 2007; 2008;

Knappett 2004; Knappett and Malafouris 2008; Latour 2005). Relational theories consider the subject as thoroughly emergent in its worldly entanglements; as a dweller *through* identity whose very subjectivity is realized in the assembly of identifying practices. Taken to its logical conclusions, such a move may appear to obviate the human subject altogether by dissolving all commonsense distinctions between mind and matter, human and non-human actors within an infinite relational ‘meshwork’ (Ingold 2007; 2008; cf. Knappett and Malafouris 2008). Understandably, this is a conclusion that many scholars find difficult to accept. I suggest that we can, however, embrace a fully relational ontology of becoming while avoiding a precipitous slippage into the anarchy of pure symmetrical agency and undifferentiated relationality. Subjects emerge from, rather than precede, the relations in which they are enmeshed, but are *nonetheless real, emergent phenomena* (cf. DeLanda 2006). Moreover, their experience of emergence is culturally constructed through institutionalized identification practices.

Institutionalization

The fundamental relationality of the subject’s becoming does not mean that representational modes of identification are unimportant, or restricted only to the modern west. Indeed, characteristically ‘relational’ forms of personhood, such as Strathern’s (1988) Melanesian ‘dividuals’, depend to some extent on the concept of a stable intending subject. This is most evident in instances of gift exchange: the gift is no gift at all unless it is first *owned* by, which is to say *identified with*, the giver. Here, the giver’s sacrifice is only meaningful if the infinite web of relations standing behind the gift’s identification with the giver can be forestalled. The gift:giver relation must be bracketed off from those that give rise to it. Without this binding process, the gift cannot function to ‘distribute personhood’ (Gell 1998), be called an ‘inalienable commodity’ (Appadurai 1986), operate within a regime of so-called ‘partible personhood’ (Fowler 2004), or ‘enchain’ persons within social relations (Brittain and Harris 2010; Chapman 2000; Jones 2005). In all of these anthropological cases, the subject must experience a moment of fixity to which objects and others may be identified. Here, representational and relational-affective forms of identification can be seen as mutually interdependent, with representational modes becoming significant in relationships in which a transcendental subject, however fleetingly, must be ‘conjured up’ to facilitate a meaningful exchange.

The difference, then, between societies in which relational-affective forms of identification predominate and those where representational modes predominate is spatiotemporal, rather than categorical. In the west, we may recognize that people act or speak differently in different relational contexts, but over the long term, a stable ego is presumed and projected. In societies in which relational-affective identification predominates, the subject may appear fixed in the instantiation of a specific relationship, but over time is expected to expand and change as his or her inter-subjective constellation

also changes. So we must distinguish between the kinds of subjects that societal institutions tend to idealize and reify, and the embodied identification practices through which those kinds of subjectivities are institutionalized in time and space. Foucault's (1977) work on modernity and bodily discipline illustrates this point. The development of new kinds of institutions – factories, prisons, schools – involved a corresponding change in the constitution of the institutional subject that was enacted through shifts in bodily *habitus* associated with the emergence of clock time. The body is critical here, since it is through the body that objects and others can become attached to selves. The way in which representational and relational-affective identification practices variously engage the body can thus be viewed as central to the institutionalization of subjects according to specific ontological programs (cf. Shilling 1993).

Conjuring the subject: a case study in identification

The Iroquoian effigy smoking pipe provides an intriguing case through which to examine modes of identification in the past. Northern Iroquoian peoples occupied the Lower Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region of Eastern North America from at least AD 1000 (Fig. 5.1) (Bamann, *et al.* 1992; Warrick 2000). Sustained contact with Europeans began at the turn of the seventeenth century. At that time, Northern Iroquoians were organized into tribal groups that were further allied into a series of major political confederacies (Snow 1994). Iroquoian peoples were swidden horticulturalists, hunters and fishers (Engelbrecht 1974; 2003). Their villages, which were occupied by up to one or two-thousand people, were composed of large longhouses often surrounded by a palisade (Warrick 2008; Warrick 1984). Social organization was based around matrilineal clans and moieties that cross-cut villages of the same tribal group (Fenton 1940; Morgan 1851). Economic and political egalitarianism were strongly asserted by consensus-based decision-making and prohibitions against the accumulation of wealth (Trigger 1976; 1990).

Tobacco and smoking pipes played important roles in Iroquoian culture, ranging from routine daily consumption (Thwaites 1896–1901 [vol. 12], 115), to household rituals of hospitality (Wrong 1939, 88), to formalized exchanges of pipes, tobacco, and smoke in contexts of trade and diplomacy (Thwaites 1896–1901 [vol. 15], 25–27, [vol. 27], 299; Morgan 1851, 118). One pipe style that has intrigued archaeologists since the late nineteenth century is the effigy pipe. Effigy pipes were normally modeled out of finely tempered clay (or, rarely, carved from stone), sometimes decorated with lines and punctates, burnished, fired at low temperatures, and painted with red ochre (Engelbrecht 2003; Mathews 1979; 1981; Noble 1979). Effigies took both zoomorphic and anthropomorphic forms, with birds and humans being particularly common in the seventeenth century.

Numerous hypotheses have been forwarded to explain these effigies. Early efforts by Boyle (1901; 1902), Laidlaw (1903), and Hunter (1902) involved attempts to interpret effigies as 'clan totems' and as 'primitive' portraiture. Both of these models involved

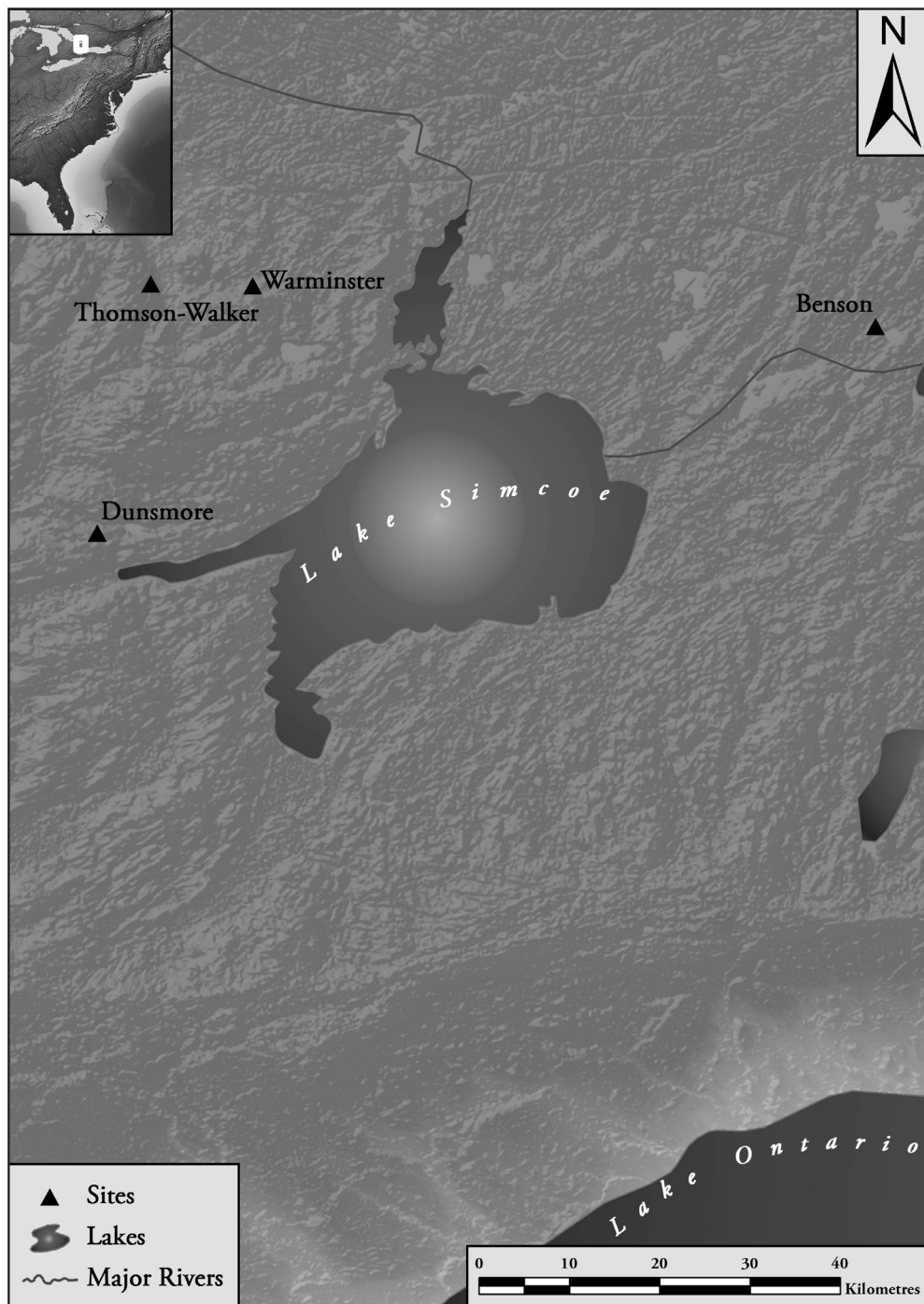


Fig. 5.1: Wendat sites mentioned in text (map by Ryan K. McNutt).

viewing the effigies in terms of a representationalist paradigm, either at the scale of the institutional group (totemic) or individual. Laidlaw, for instance, became frustrated with the lack of fit between zoomorphic forms and Iroquoian totemic animals and concluded that the pipes were rather the ‘results of individual skill and taste’ (Laidlaw 1903, 38). Noble (1968) revisited the totemic hypothesis in the 1960s, asserting that there was a better fit between animal representations and lineage, rather than clan, totems. However, his argument remained unconvincing, and he later relaxed his position that all effigies represented lineage totems (1979, 83).

Since the late 1970s, interpretations focusing on shamanism (Braun 2012; Mathews 1976; von Gernet 1995; von Gernet and Timmins 1987), animism (Engelbrecht 2003), mytho-historical narratives (Wonderley 2005; 2012), and Amerindian cosmologies (Kearsley 1997; Engelbrecht 2003; Robertson 2005, Wonderley 2002; 2005) have become prominent. Such interpretations reflect the influence of post-processual archaeology and its concerns for reading meaning from material culture (e.g. Hodder 1986). The new interest in meaning led to a much broader appreciation of the ontological context in which effigy pipes were produced and used. Analyses emphasize the role of pipes in ‘individualistic’ spiritual practices in which the smoker communicated with various spiritual beings (Braun 2012). von Gernet, in particular, has developed a strong case for the use of smoking pipes in shamanic experiences of trance and spirit flight (von Gernet 1995; von Gernet and Timmins 1987).

However, these recent studies stop short of adopting a fully relational model for effigy pipes and related smoking practices. While certain relational qualities of the Iroquoian worldview are noted by these scholars, a subtle but important distinction is made that recognizes that the analyst’s ontology is not similarly relational. Effigies remain the material ‘expressions’ of a belief system, ‘imbued’ with meaning (cf. Robb 1998). Understood in this way, the only form of identity effigy pipes seem to be involved in enacting is that of the introspective individual. The small size of effigies, their idiosyncratic forms, and tendency to face the smoker, have been taken as evidence of their ‘self-directed’ (Brasser 1980), ‘esoteric’, and ‘highly personal’ (Robertson 2005, 54) roles: ‘rather than a decorative display for others, the image had meaning and was meant for the person using the pipe’ (Engelbrecht 2003, 55). While these scholars recognize the active role of pipes in Iroquoian spiritual life, they continue to apply a representationalist paradigm to Iroquoian identification practices: the Cartesian subject remains.

What effigies want

Shifting effigy interpretations away from the dominant paradigm requires a different emphasis. Instead of asking what effigies *stand for*, we need to consider what they do, what they *want*. I do not of course mean that effigies have human-like intentions and desires. They do, however, carry forward the primary agency of producers and consumers in the specifics of how their forms were designed to act (Gell 1998). This

sort of interpretation depends on considering how effigy pipes were engaged with in practice, and what sorts of relationships those engagements set up. I will briefly review a few of these.

As a group, Iroquoian effigy pipes tend to draw attention to certain bodily characteristics, actions, senses, and conditions. Human, mammalian, and raptorial effigies have a strong bias toward emphasizing the head and face, and diminishing the relative size, detail, and artistic attention placed on the lower body. Reptile and amphibian effigies place a greater emphasis on bodily characteristics such as the sinuous coils of the snake or the round shell of the turtle. Effigy faces were normally constructed above the rim of the bowl, facing the smoker (Noble 1979). The small size of the effigy faces, and the short stems of the pipes (c. 3–15 cm) created an intimate space between the smoker and the effigy image. Strong arguments have been made that effigies were understood by Iroquoians to be ‘other-than-human’ persons. Among the Wendat and Five Nations Iroquois, tobacco was routinely burnt or given as an offering to cosmological entities (Morgan 1851, 155). So its use in smoking pipes had an implicit connection to sacrifices intended to invoke or propitiate various personages. Moreover, other forms of human and animal representations, such as the masks worn by members of the ‘false face’ curing society, were considered animate, and when worn in dances, allowed the dancer to be possessed by the spirit represented (Fenton 1987). Smaller effigies, made of antler, bone, and stone were used as charms and were similarly understood by the Wendat as ‘*oki*’ or powerful ‘persons’ (Tooker 1991).

The close face-to-face interaction with such *oki* experienced in the act of smoking involved a specific kind of relationship. Pipe characteristics tell us about the type of relationships that were being sought. These involved exchanges of vital properties, especially those related to the senses and to breath. The main categories of animal effigies tend to emphasize the sensorial characteristics typified by a species. For instance, owl effigies normally have disproportionately large eyes, an effect magnified by punctates encircling or radiating from them (Fig. 5.2a). Bears, whose sense of smell is notoriously acute, are depicted with imposing upturned snouts and prominent nostrils (Fig. 5.2b). Anthropomorphic pipes frequently emphasize the sensing orifices of the face – especially the nose and mouth. Few involve ‘naturalism’; importance seems to have been placed on the possibility of a substantial exchange, either through the nose, in types where the nostrils are deeply punctured, or the mouth, which is frequently depicted as open, possibly singing, blowing, sucking, or forming the actual bowl of the pipe so that smoke is drawn from the mouth of the effigy figure into the mouth of the smoker (Fig. 5.3a).

The so-called ‘pinch-face’ type is particularly intriguing in this regard (see Fig. 5.3b). These pipes have long prognathic faces, deeply set, sunken eyes and cheeks, with mouths forming a prominent circle (Kearsley 1997; Mathews 1976). One hand is usually raised to the side of the mouth, and lines are shown radiating from the corners of the lips. Certain animal effigies, such as the bear in figure 5.2b, also share these lines, suggesting that they do not represent tattoos, as some have suggested,

a



b



Fig. 5.2: (a) Owl effigy from the Wendat Thompson-Walker site (early seventeenth century) showing the exaggerated eyes typical of this type [photo credit: Royal Ontario Museum Images]. The effigy has been pierced for suspension following the pipe's breakage; (b) Bear effigy showing large upturned snout and nostrils, and incised lines emanating from corners of mouth (Warminster site, early seventeenth century Wendat) (photo by author).

a



b



Fig. 5.3: (a) Anthropomorphic effigy in which the mouth forms the pipe bowl (Thompson-Walker site, seventeenth century Wendat); (b) 'Pinch-face' effigy showing the 'blowing/sucking' mouth motif, upraised hand, and 'tracheal' indentations characteristic of this type (Thompson-Walker site, seventeenth century Wendat) (photo credit: Royal Ontario Museum Images).

but rather respiration or voice. Effigy pipes also sometimes have sounding and animating elements, such as rattle cavities, and orifices that pierce into the bowl of the pipe, so that smoke can emanate from them (Engelbrecht 2003). In pinch-face and related depictions, the throat of the effigy often becomes the stem of the pipe, and is highlighted by small incisions or punctations which give an impression of inter-tracheal continuity during the act of smoking (Fig. 5.4a).

These characteristics point not only to the fact that effigies were understood as active and reactive social persons, but that smoking involved an inter-subjective sensorial exchange and shared breath. The somatic engagement effected by the pipes is further displayed by the way they were sometimes modified. Targeted iconoclasm is not uncommon in, especially, anthropomorphic pipes. In the pinch-face effigy in figure 5.4a, the blowing mouth has been carefully chipped away. Examples of defacement and probable intentional breakage of pinch-face effigies have been documented in an extensive survey by Kearsley (1997). Other examples, such as the face in figure 5.4b, have been intentionally ground down. These cases suggest that the specific actions or features depicted by effigy images were seen as powerful and potentially dangerous.

The inter-subjective themes involved here are also highlighted in examples of dual and multiple effigy pipes, where human-human, human-animal and animal-animal hybrids and perhaps transformations are indicated. In some cases, pipe motifs blend effigy animal or human elements with other forms of material culture, such as pottery

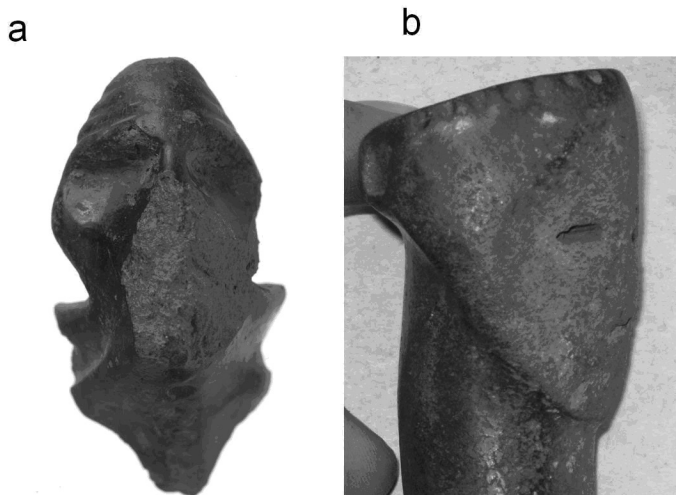


Fig. 5.4: (a) 'Pinch-face' effigy with the 'blowing' mouth intentionally chipped away. Note the tracheal element running down the 'throat' of the effigy (Thompson-Walker site, seventeenth century Wendat) [photo credit: Royal Ontario Museum Images]; (b) Anthropomorphic effigy with face intentionally ground off (Benson site, late sixteenth century Wendat) (photo by author).

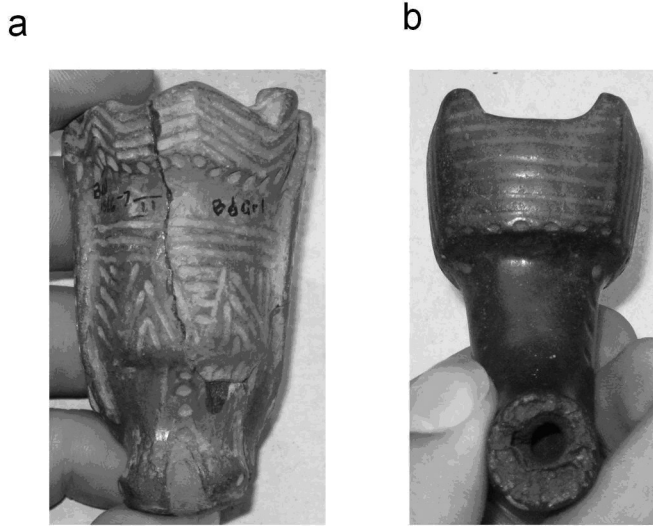


Fig. 5.5: (a) 'Torso' (also the bowl) of a 'pinch-face' effigy pipe viewed from behind. The body is skeumorphic with a decorated Wendat pottery vessel; (b) the same bear effigy as shown in Fig. 5.2b (Benson site, late sixteenth century Wendat). This unusual effigy faces away from the smoker. The smoker's perspective, shown here, causes the pipe to resemble a common Iroquoian four-cornered non-effigy style known as the 'coronet' pipe (Warminster site, early seventeenth century Wendat) (photos by author).

vessels. In figure 5.5a, the body of a pinch-face effigy is rendered to resemble the form and incised decoration of a ceramic vessel. These pipes play with perspective by 'transforming' when they are viewed or approached from different directions (Fig. 5.5b). A similar effect is achieved in cases where pipes with broken stems are repaired. In several such cases, the bowl was drilled on the back for the insertion of a new stem, so that the former relationship between effigy and smoker was reversed, with the effigy's 'blowing' mouth subsequently facing outwards (Fig. 5.6).

The themes of bodily and sensorial interaction engendered in effigy pipe smoking are reflected in other Iroquoian practices, especially those associated with curing, conjuring, and gift-giving. Wendat shamanic healers, or *arendiwane*, cured by blowing hot coals on the bodies of afflicted persons (Wrong 1939, 200-201). The masked dancers of the 'false face' curing society likewise blew ashes during curing rituals, and the masks of some false face beings depict blowing actions (Fenton 1987). In a similar vein, mourners were rendered 'ill' through the imbalance of spiritual power caused by the death of a lineage member (Richter 1983). In cases of reparation payments for murder, wampum strings were presented to the victim's family by the family of the perpetrator. The emphasis was on bodily actions that would revive the senses of the bereaved. Thus, strings were given to 'wipe away the tears', 'unplug

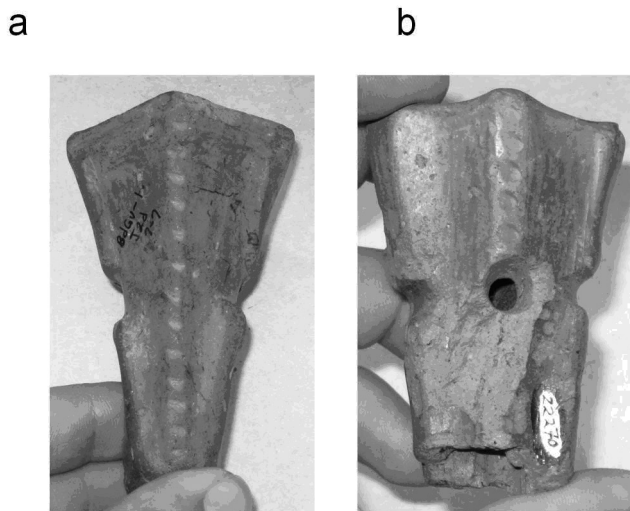


Fig. 5.6: (a) Back 'torso' view of a typical 'pinch-face' effigy pipe (Warminster site, early seventeenth century Wendat); (b) the same view of 'pinch-face' effigy pipe which has been drilled into the bowl to permit the insertion of a new stem. This would have caused the effigy 'blowing' mouth to subsequently face away from the smoker (Warminster site, early seventeenth century Wendat) (photos by author).

the ears', and 'unstop the throat' (Snow 1994). In a Jesuit account of a Wendat reparation payment, a pipe was given 'to console them in their affliction and to wipe away their tears' (Thwaites 1896–1901 [vol. 10], 219). Bodily illness was closely connected to affect here. The evil-minded disposition of the witch was reflected in his stereotypically deformed body (e.g., Tadodaho [Beauchamp 1905, 156–57]). Grief produced stoppages of the senses and voice, eliminating communication. In this context, the gift of wampum, tobacco, and pipes was understood to act on the bodies and emotions of the recipient, eliminating those stoppages and shifting the affective character of relationships.

Attachment and transcendence

Effigy pipes can be understood to have focused and condensed these general concepts within a specialized technology. The chemical properties of nicotine probably played a significant role here. The power of nicotine to shift people's minds, to facilitate attachments and dependencies, not only between bodies and tobacco, but between selves and others, seems to have been critical to pipe use. Tobacco was smoked routinely and socially among Iroquoian men, to the extent that strong chemical dependencies were involved (Thwaites 1896–1901 [vol. 3], 116–117; [vol. 17], 127). Offering the pipe to a guest was an important gesture of hospitality, and this practice

was institutionalized in diplomatic circumstances in which lighted pipes were exchanged between parties (Morgan 1851, 118). Pipes were smoked continuously during village council meetings, and the smoke was said to promote enlightenment and harmonious relations (Thwaites 1896–1901 [vol. 15], 25–27). In the case of effigy pipes, the particular inter-subjective interactions involved were more sharply defined (as that between subjects and cosmological others) and the nature of the attachment was targeted toward certain bodily organs, senses, and states.

From this perspective, effigy pipes can be interpreted as specialized ‘technologies of attachment’ – socio-technic assemblages geared toward establishing positive bodily and affective relations with others. The use of drugs and music to facilitate such affecting relationships via transcendent experiences of has been explored by Gomart and Hennion (1999). They write compellingly of the conditioning preparations cocaine users make to bring about experiences of transcendence. Such experiences cannot be determined in advance. Rather, they involve ‘accepting that ‘external’ forces take possession of the self; of being ‘under the influence’ of something else; of bracketing away one’s own control and will in order to be expelled or rendered ‘beside oneself’” (Gomart and Hennion 1999, 221). In concert with tobacco, mixtures of other herbs (Engelbrecht 2003), effigy images, and potent substances (such as blood, ochre, and charcoal) embedded in the fabric of the pipe (Wrong 1939, 197; Braun 2012), Iroquoian subjects were, I suggest, able to skillfully produce conditions that were conducive to such transcendent experiences.

The effigy smoking pipe can thus be understood as a critical vehicle for conditioning relations of attachment through transcendence. But what of identification practices? Can the relational-affective ‘conditioning’ of the subject by effigy pipes and tobacco be understood to have reified certain kinds of institutionalized identity? My argument is that this was indeed the case. This is what is precisely so fascinating about Iroquoian effigy pipes – they involved *both* representational and relational-affective modes of identification, so that the virtual conjuring of a transcendental Iroquoian subject was effected in the moment of its relational attachment.

Let us consider how this dialectical form of subjective identification worked. As discussed above, a relational-affective mode of identification ultimately depends on face-to-face encounters. In order for attachments to be made and relations to be enacted, however, the terms of engagement must be momentarily bracketed off from an infinite regression of supporting relationships. The unstable, fluid, and forever *becoming* subject cannot be apprehended in the moment of a specific affective exchange. The meaningful gift of wampum beads, pipe, or sacred smoke, was arguably impossible without a simultaneous definition of the self, and the things it could be said to own. Over the long term, relational identification practices constituted a fluid, distributed, thoroughly networked person or ‘dividual’. But the precise moment of exchange relied on a temporarily fixed definition of the self and its identification within an assemblage of others (which may be other people, body parts, things, places, and ‘other-than-human’ persons). This temporary delimitation

permitted the gift to carry with it the identity of the giver. At the crucial moment of exchange, the long-term partible, distributed, or dividual person depended on a series of relational stoppages.

In the case of the effigy pipe, it is here that representational identification practices serve, by the back door, in the institutionalization of a relational-affective subject. As a technology of attachment, the effigy pipe depends for its activity on its interpretation as *a sign of something that lies beyond itself*. This does the work of subjective ‘bracketing’ or ‘black-boxing’ (cf. Latour 2005) that I have argued is the precondition for a meaningful affective attachment. In relational terms, the effigy likeness ‘territorializes’ (DeLanda 2006) the other – and so, reciprocally, the self. Thus, the moment of substantial exchange is one in which all the prior relations that give rise to the gift of smoke are forestalled, black-boxed, and embodied by the giver. The dissociative experiences of transcendence and attachment facilitated by the pipe as a relational-affective tool are therefore focused and heightened in the effigy genre. The representation presences the transcendental subject – an ego or *desiring soul* – in the moment of its passionate self-giving.

Power, the transcendental ego, and institution-building: Iroquoian effigies in context

The interdependence of representational and relational-affective modes of identification in effigy pipe use parallels the way that Iroquoian subjects were institutionalized as composite ‘part-in-whole’ persons. In the seventeenth century, the Iroquoian ego-subject and institutional collectives (house, clan, village, and tribe) were articulated as nested elements of a single ‘fractal’ relation (Creese 2012). In this system, the ego was affirmed and empowered in its inter-subjective attachments – the very relationships of mutual dependency that defined social institutions. For instance, the Wendat verb for the ritual invocation of spiritual power (*atren*), was also used to refer to acts of consent, collusion, and group formation (Potier 1920, 203, in Steckley 2007). Where the political order depended on consensus decision-making (Trigger 1990), constructive power flowed from consent and collective action. Subjects that sought to divorce themselves from their collective obligations were seen as witches (Trigger 1990). Conversely, sickness reflected the neglect of the ego by the collective. Physical illnesses were attributed to unfulfilled desires of the soul. These desires, revealed in dreams, were carefully fulfilled by the sick person’s family or village, often at considerable collective expense. Such practices affirmed an intending inner self – a desirous soul – but tied its healthful realization to the social collective on which it depended (Tooker 1991, 86–91). This institutionalized Iroquoian ‘ego-in-collective’ or fractal person was brought into sharp focus in the mediatory experiences of effigy pipe smoking.

Conclusions

Iroquoian effigy smoking pipes involved two modes of identification that I have argued served in the institutionalization of a particular view of the self. These modes depended respectively on representational and relational-affective practices, and tended toward different spatiotemporal constructions of the subject. While a relational-affective mode predominated in Iroquoian society, the establishment of social relationships through exchange required subjects to be momentarily identified, however fictively, as fixed, determinate selves. The representational qualities of the effigy images, which acted to conjure certain cosmological others, reciprocally affirmed a transcendental ego-subject, permitting the co-production of subject and other that was a necessary precondition for somatic exchange. The experience of smoking tobacco through effigies, with its heavy relational emphasis on inter-subjective bodily engagements, located the subject's experience of itself in its attachments with others. This relationship was fundamental to the social fabric of sixteenth and seventeenth-century Iroquoian society, where the development and expansion of tribal institutions depended on a conceptual interdependency between the realization of the soul's inner desires and its web of relational attachments.

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Chapter 6

Drinking Identities and Changing Ideologies in Iron Age Sardinia

Jeremy Hayne
(*University of Glasgow*)

Abstract

A common shortcoming of traditional investigations into identity and material culture is an underestimation of how far static material culture can signal the complex, shifting and multifaceted human identities. In the Mediterranean during the first millennium BC, the presence of foreign material culture in culture contact situations is often understood to signal the consumption of foreign material by local communities. But food and drink consumption play a crucial role in the creation and maintenance of the participants' identities: it is not solely a passive acceptance of foreign practices. In short, foreign material consumption does not just mean wholesale acceptance but rather selective appropriation, which can shed light on the types of interactions that took place between local and foreign communities. Using theoretical models from sociology and anthropology, this article explores the relationship between alcohol consumption and the construction of identities, particularly how the presence of foreign wine-related material culture in indigenous sites related to changes in the local societies. The Iron Age in Sardinia was a period of noticeable change, and ritual consumption in the form of feasting and drinking was important for maintaining and reaffirming the communal and social identities of the local communities. The evidence suggests that active interactions with foreigners in the Iron Age led to the regionalisation of the island communities resulting in changes to local ideologies and social identities.

Keywords: *Iron Age Sardinia, consumption, alcohol, culture contact, Phoenicians, trade*

Introduction: you are what you drink

This chapter considers the relationships between drinking practices and local identities, and how they were managed through interactions between different communities in Sardinia during the Late Bronze (LBA) and Early Iron Ages (EIA). For the period in question, this involves examining the relationships within the local Sardinian communities, as well as looking at the connections between local and foreign peoples and the way in which their identities were reaffirmed or modified to a greater or lesser extent through these entanglements. In studying drinking, I intend to look at not just the actual consumption of beverages and the types of material culture that were a part of the encounters, but also to understand what this meant for the participating communities. The relationships are explored by using examples of the material culture from three different areas of the LBA/IA Nuragic culture of Sardinia (c. ninth–seventh centuries BC) to understand the nature of drinking practices from different places and through time periods (Fig. 6.1).

Drinking is relevant to the study of identities because, apart from being the natural and everyday activity of quenching one's thirst, specific types of social drinking are centrally related to aspects of human behaviour such as socializing and hospitality, and are often used to mark differences or similarities between groups. Repeated, ritualised and communal drinking is often seen as part of the wider field of 'feasting' (Dietler 1996; Dietler and Hayden 2001, 3), and whilst alcohol can also be considered a type of food, containing carbohydrates and proteins (Dietler 2006, 231), it is generally consumed for sociological rather than physiological reasons. This paper therefore focuses on the controlled and ritualised aspects of the communal drinking of alcohol. As this type of consumption often takes place in specific localities the areas set aside for communal drinking are also fundamental spaces for negotiations and interactions that relate to the formation of identities of the communities involved.

Drinking identities

'Drinking [alcohol] is essentially a social act, performed in a recognised social context,' (Douglas 1987, 4). In discussing drinking identities I focus on the central role alcohol has in social or group activities. Mary Douglas, in her book *Constructing Identities* (1987), was one of the first to focus on the ways that alcohol consumption is a means of creating identities, especially through its use to delimit participants of particular social groups. This does not mean that drinking is merely the expression of ethnic or nationalistic cultural identities in the way the British or Germans are characterised by their 'heavy' drinking, but that, more subtly, drinking can be a guide to the disparate cultural identities that make up different communities (Wilson 2005, 4). This approach is especially relevant for the ancient world, where identities are often seen as being ethnic-based (Hall 1997; Jones 1997). It is only recently that scholars have articulated a more flexible approach to identity based upon the way in which people choose to



Fig. 6.1: Map of Sardinia with sites described in text (Map by Ryan K. McNutt).

reproduce (similar) shared practices that relate identity to choices made concerning, for example, gender, age, religion or social practices (such as segregation or inclusion of people, limits of intoxication, rituals of serving). These are all highly charged aspects of how identities are constructed through drinking and drinking rituals. (Blake 2005, 102–103; Diaz-Andreu *et al.* 2005, 10; Dietler 2006, 236; van Dommelen and Knapp 2010, 4).

Ethnographic examples can show how drinking cultures relate to these different identities. A good modern example is by Gerald Mars (1987, 91–96). In his discussion of Newfoundland longshoremen, he notes how the position they hold in society is closely related to the types of drinking practices they perform and the location of these drinking practices. Insiders, those belonging to the ‘gang’ and who are termed ‘regular’ men, mainly drink in taverns, buying drinks for acquaintances as a measure of hospitality and dependence. In order to integrate themselves into the group, new members often buy more drinks than established members. This contrasts with the outsiders, the more marginal members of the longboat community whose drinking follows different patterns outside the tavern. Here, a leader who owes favours provides drinks to a selected group of colleagues. These identities are drawn up along political lines and relate to the jockeying of position in political and economic arenas. They also highlight differences in gender and between domestic and social settings as no women are present, and indeed drinking does not take place at home in what is considered the female domain. This dichotomy between drinking in social and domestic spaces is widespread, as shown in Dwight Heath’s (2000, 74) discussion on changing Anglo-Saxon attitudes to drinking where ‘the home . . . [took] on the imagery of a sanctuary of sobriety, managed by the temperate housewife’.

Another example from modern Sardinia emphasises gender and social roles in the rural uplands of the centre of the island where social drinking underpins the differences between an urban cosmopolitan lifestyle, whose members do not indulge in communal drinking, and a rural pastoral society which identifies itself partly through its (male) social drinking culture (Sorge 2008, 815–17).

As well as affirming and marking different types of identities within particular communities, drinking practices can also be used to affirm traditional identities in periods of change. Instead of marking differences, drinking ceremonies are tools that people use to ‘construct reality’ (Douglas 1987, 8–12) by maintaining and reinforcing group identities in the face of changing external situations or a world that was seen to be fragmenting (Hazan 1987; Heath 2000, 161–64).

Prescriptions about who can and cannot drink and the rules and regulations that each society has about drinking habits are fundamental aspects of Bourdieu’s *habitus*, the sub-conscious dispositions and classificatory systems that govern local practices and go right to the heart of the sociological aspect of identity construction (Bourdieu 1977, 5; Diaz-Andreu *et al.* 2005). Drinking alcohol, unlike quenching one’s thirst, is a socially learned behaviour, but the rules that each society implements about who may or may not drink, or when and how, are often not explicit, but

rather have to be learnt through observation. For example, the social conditioning of the *habitus* can mean that children or women drink less than adult men. The creation of identities is thus both passive and active (Hodos 2010, 3) as these codes are learnt through interaction. They are also subject to change so that drinking identities are never static but are modified through the entanglements that occur as people interact.

Drinking and rituals

In most societies drinking is rarely an individual activity; thus, alcohol consumption is closely related to group identities rather than single ones. As a repeated communal action, drinking is not just a social activity but also a type of ritual which brings together practice theory and identity. According to Catherine Bell (1997, 79), ritual is a way of mediating the ‘enduring cultural structures and the current situation,’ and thus ritual activities take place within an arena where social codes are negotiated. Hence, the performative aspect of drinking, as part of a ritual activity, is especially relevant because in a social situation it can be very clear who is drinking what, where and with whom. Indeed, rituals such as the Christian communion or Jewish Sabbath drinking provide guidelines for controlled consumption because, although drinking is common to all societies, uncontrolled drunkenness is usually frowned upon.

Activities that differentiate performers in these communal drinking activities are notoriously difficult to identify in the archaeological record. For example, choices made over the cultural affiliation of sixth–fourth centuries BC Anatolians are represented not by the type of drinking vessel but rather by the way it was held (on three fingers, as revealed in iconographic representations). Holding the drinking cup by the fingertips implied affiliation with the external Persian Empire and concurrently signalled diacritically differences from the local society, something not possible to see from the archaeological evidence alone (Miller 2011, 114).

Material culture and change

Yet, it is material culture that guides us through the continuities and changes in *habitus* and local identities. People use objects to affirm their own social, personal and group identities (see Marín-Aguilera, Pierce, this volume). More than this, it is through material culture that communities or individuals communicate with each other. This can be done consciously, for example by burying status symbols with tribal chiefs, or unconsciously through the construction and use of ordinary everyday objects (Hodder 2012; van Dommelen and Rowlands 2012, 22–23). In situations of culture contact, the presence of material culture marks complex interactions between the material itself and the local and foreign populations. This is quite different from the more traditional view of contact in which the discovery of foreign material in

indigenous contexts has often been read from an acculturation perspective. For example, in Mediterranean archaeology the discovery of foreign, e.g. Greek and Etruscan, material has been read as passive acceptance of Eastern cultures by locals (Dietler 2005, 55–61). This approach leaves little room for active local identities to select and manipulate the material that they encounter, and often stems from an essentialist approach to the material culture whereby Greek or Etruscan pots stand for a clearly defined Greek or Etruscan ethnic identity. Rather, identities do change, and the interactions between humans and material culture lead to alterations in objects' meanings. Objects change and mutate as they interact with humans through processes of selective appropriation or rejection and 'indigenisation' (Appadurai 1986b; Dietler 2010, 59; Hodder 2012; Meskell 2005). For example, the appearance of restricted groups of elaborate foreign drinking vessels in Celtic Europe and Mycenaean Greece have been used to demonstrate the changes in identities of the local communities through the growth of elite groups in these areas (Dietler 1997; Wright 1996, 294–95). At the same time, the examples of drinking vessels suggest that it was the presence of pre-existing drinking cultures in these communities that facilitated the entanglements with the incoming material culture and consequent hybridizations of social practices.

Apart from having a social function, drinking is also linked to the economic and political activities of the community. Beer, especially, can be made quickly and usually has a short life span, needing to be consumed soon after it is created (Heath 2000, 139). Wine, on the other hand, travels well and requires longer preparation, with up to three years of constant tending needed before the grapes can be harvested, implying concepts of land ownership and management. This suggests that wine production is linked to the growth of complex societies who could manage the long-term production, transport and storage of the beverage in a way that was not necessary with beer (Botto 2012, 109–12; Heath 2000, 145; Joffe 1998, 298–99; Smith 1987). The increase in connectivity between different communities in the Mediterranean IA meant that this beverage was well-placed to be commoditized and valued by, and thereby exchanged between, different societies. The active decision to produce and consume wine therefore is closely linked to changing societies, as making decisions about what, when and why to consume is part of a dynamic process of self-definition and identification (Mullins 2011, 134–35).

Evidence for drinking: Sardinians

Social drinking and the accompanying economic implications within Nuragic Sardinian communities are difficult to trace. This is partly due to the lack of scientific archaeobotanic analyses carried out on material remains from excavations, and partly due to discussions on prehistoric alcohol being overshadowed by the search for evidence of Nuragic wine and debates on whether its production preceded the arrival of Phoenician settlers (M. Perra 2012; Sanges 2007).

The author's opinion is that whilst wine production was probably introduced by Phoenicians, who had a special affinity with the product, alcohol in various forms was almost certainly produced earlier. 'Drinking [alcohol] is woven into the very fabric of social existence . . . it is important, even in societies where people are supposed not to drink' (Heath 2000, 5). There is no reason to think the indigenous Sardinians did not drink their own form of alcoholic drinks made using grain, honey or fruits.

In the absence of other data, the evidence for wine comes either from the material culture of consumption (cups, jugs and mixing vessels) or from the presence of grape (*vitis vinifera*) seeds or other archaeobotanic remains on indigenous sites. The most detailed analyses have been carried out at the BA Nuragic site of Sa Osa (Cabras) (Lovicu *et al.* 2011; Orrù *et al.* 2012) where LBA seeds of *vitis vinifera* have been discovered. Similarly at Duos Nuraghes (Borore), wild *vitis vinifera* seeds were identified in LBA and IA contexts (Bakels 2002, 7–8). At the BA/IA site of Genna Maria (Villanovaforru), domestic grape seeds were found from IA deposits (Bakels 2002, 6) and the LBA/EIA site of Bau Nuraxi (Trier) contained stratified deposits of the domestic *Vitis vinifera sativa* (Sanges 2007, 4).

While the evidence shows that cultivated grapes existed in Nuragic Sardinia, it does not tell us their purpose. Further structural evidence comes from the discovery of a small IA wine press (ninth–eighth century BC) found in a workshop at the Nuragic site of Monte Zara (Monastir). The remains of a dark liquid found in and around the press have been identified as wine (Ugas 2001, 87–88) but the one-off nature of the press and lack of other more scientific analyses preclude a definite identification of the role and function of such a structure. The definite evidence of wine production only comes much later with Punic and Roman settlements on the island (Brun 2012; van Dommelen *et al.* 2010, 1198–200).

Alcohol can be made from many types of fruits and berries, mead made from honey and local beer produced from barley are other options, the grains of which have been found at Genna Maria, Duos Nuraghes and Toscanos from the LBA and IA (Bakels 2002). The matter is further complicated by the nature of prehistoric beverages and evidence that drinks were not pure but were composed of mixed ingredients (honey, wine and beer) that came from various sources from the 4th to 1st millennium BC (McGovern 2012, 148). In the absence of hard archaeobotanic evidence, the drinking habits of the IA Sardinians can be gauged mainly by the portable material culture and contextual evidence from sites. For pre- and proto-historic Sardinia, the evidence includes askoid jugs, cups, footed cups, bowls and storage jars (Fig. 6.2) which, as in the Greek and Etruscan tradition, may have been used to ferment alcoholic beverages (Brun 2012, 73; Perkins and Attolini 1992, 104–105). Analyses done on an askoid jug from Bau Nuraxi revealed traces of wine and studies of some askoid jugs from the Antiquarium Arborese museum in Oristano have shown they contained traces of animal and vegetable fats and pine resin. This suggests that these vases had multiple functions, which included both pouring alcoholic beverages and perhaps containing unguents or precious oils (Botto 2012, 113; Sanges 2007, 5).

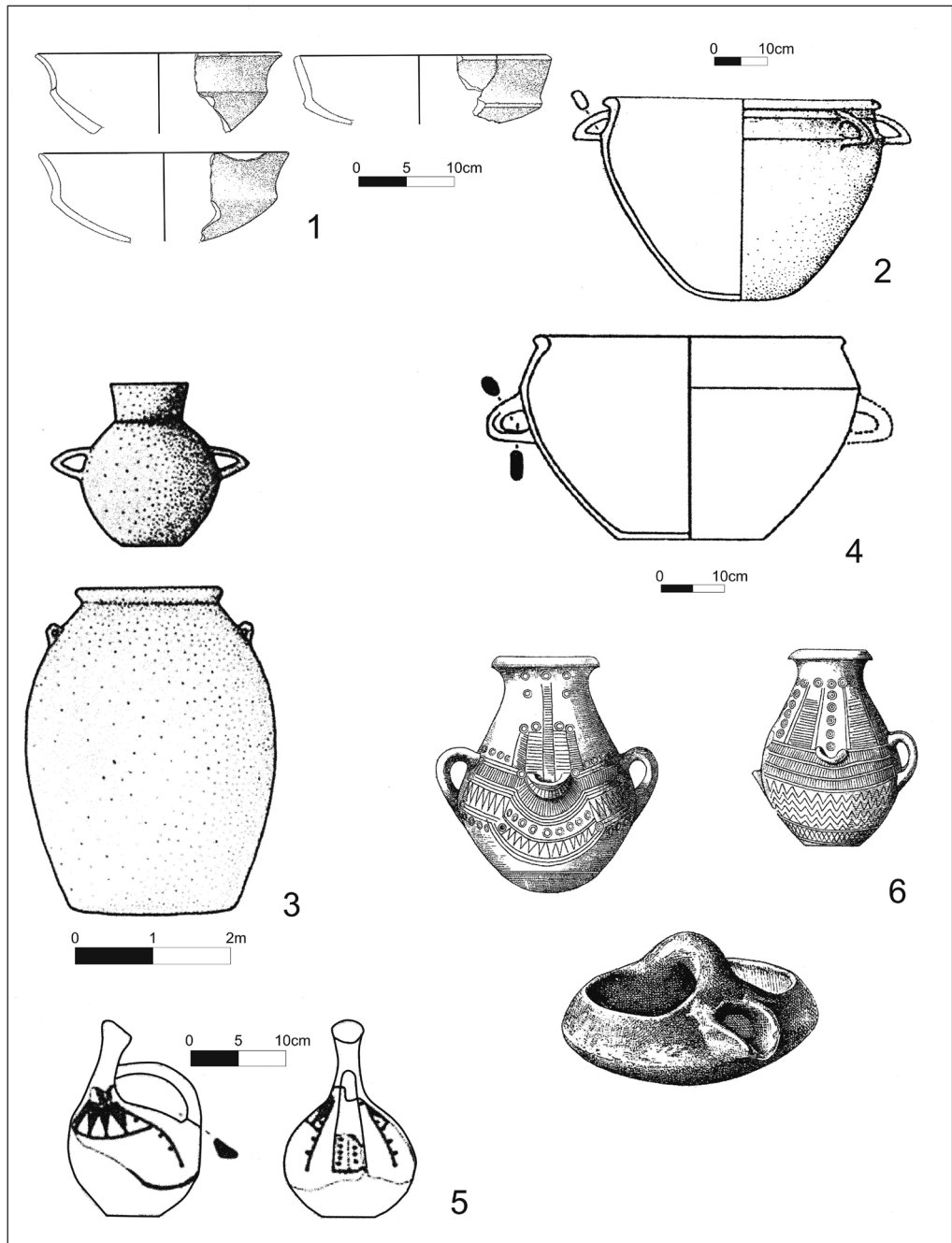


Fig. 6.2: Material culture related to drinking from Iron Age Sardinia (1. Fadda & Posi 2006, 91, fig. 64; 2. Galli 1985, 101; 3. Badas 1987, 141, tab. IV; 4. Sebis, 2007, 69, no. 15; 5. Sebis 2007, 71, fig. 2; 6. Taramelli 1918, 158, fig. 64 & 65).

Social changes in the Iron Age

The IA was a period of change in Sardinian Nuragic society. The typical Nuragic towers (nuraghi) ceased to be built from the LBA onward, and some had their functions changed from warrior strongholds to areas for ritual activity. Other socio-economic changes can be seen through the development of large villages with huts built around courtyards and the extension and development of some well sanctuaries into large federal sanctuary sites (see below) (Ugas 2009; van Dommelen 1998, 76–80; Vanzetti *et al.* 2013). Evidence for elite practices such as gift exchange, or single monumental graves, such as those in contemporary Etruria, is missing. Individual burials are rare, although those that have been found at Nuraghe Iselle (Buddusò); Sa Costa – Sardara (Senorbì); Campioni (Senorbì) and the more famous eighth/seventh century BC pit tombs at Monte Prama (Cabras), contain references to warriors (Bedini *et al.* 2012; Bernardini 2011; Tronchetti 2005). The presence and mechanisms of elite structures in IA Sardinia is currently a matter of some debate; for the purposes of this paper I assume there were no elites similar to other parts of the Mediterranean in the IA (for further discussion on this subject, see Gonzalez 2014; Ialongo 2013; Tronchetti 2012). Drinking cups, a symbol of warrior elites as found in the BA Aegean and Orientalising Italy, are completely absent from these graves.

Footed cups (chalices) do exist in other contexts from IA Sardinia (Fig. 6.3). Different sized containers have been found at sanctuaries such as Romanzesu (Fig. 6.3:5), Sierra Niedda and other sites (Serra Orrios, Flumenelongu, and San Pietro), which may have had ritual importance. Like the ceramic pilgrim flasks also found in a few LB and IA locations, they probably had foreign antecedents through Phoenician or Etruscan contacts as they do not exist in BA deposits. Footed cups are well-attested in the Etruscan funerary set and are found as early as the ninth century BC in local impasto (Bartoloni *et al.* 2012, 253–55). Unlike Sardinia, where they are associated with sanctuaries or communal sites, in Etruria they are found in individual tombs, suggesting differences in the local identities.

Another class of pottery used for holding beverages, the Sardinian askoid jug (Fig. 6.4), also points to the differences between local and foreign identities. A number of Sardinian, or copies of Sardinian, askoid jugs have been found in tombs in Etruria from the ninth/eighth centuries BC, especially around the sites of Populonia and Vetulonia (Cygielman and Pagnini 2002; Delpino 2002; Maggiani 2002). Other examples from Spain with less secure contexts (El Carambolo, Cadiz, Huelva, Castillo de Dona Blanca) seem to be from habitation or sanctuary sites (Botto 2007b; Fundoni 2009). In Sardinia, the askoid form is first found in habitation and ritual sites in the BA. From the Iron Age, many of them have increasingly elegant shapes and elaborate decorations, and the increasingly narrow neck of the IA version suggests that they were used for transporting, rather than just pouring, liquids. In Sardinia they are often associated with carinated bowls, whilst this combination is missing from the Etruscan tombs. Examples from Sardinia have often been found to be deliberately perforated, thereby destroying their function as containers but emphasising a ritual and communal function

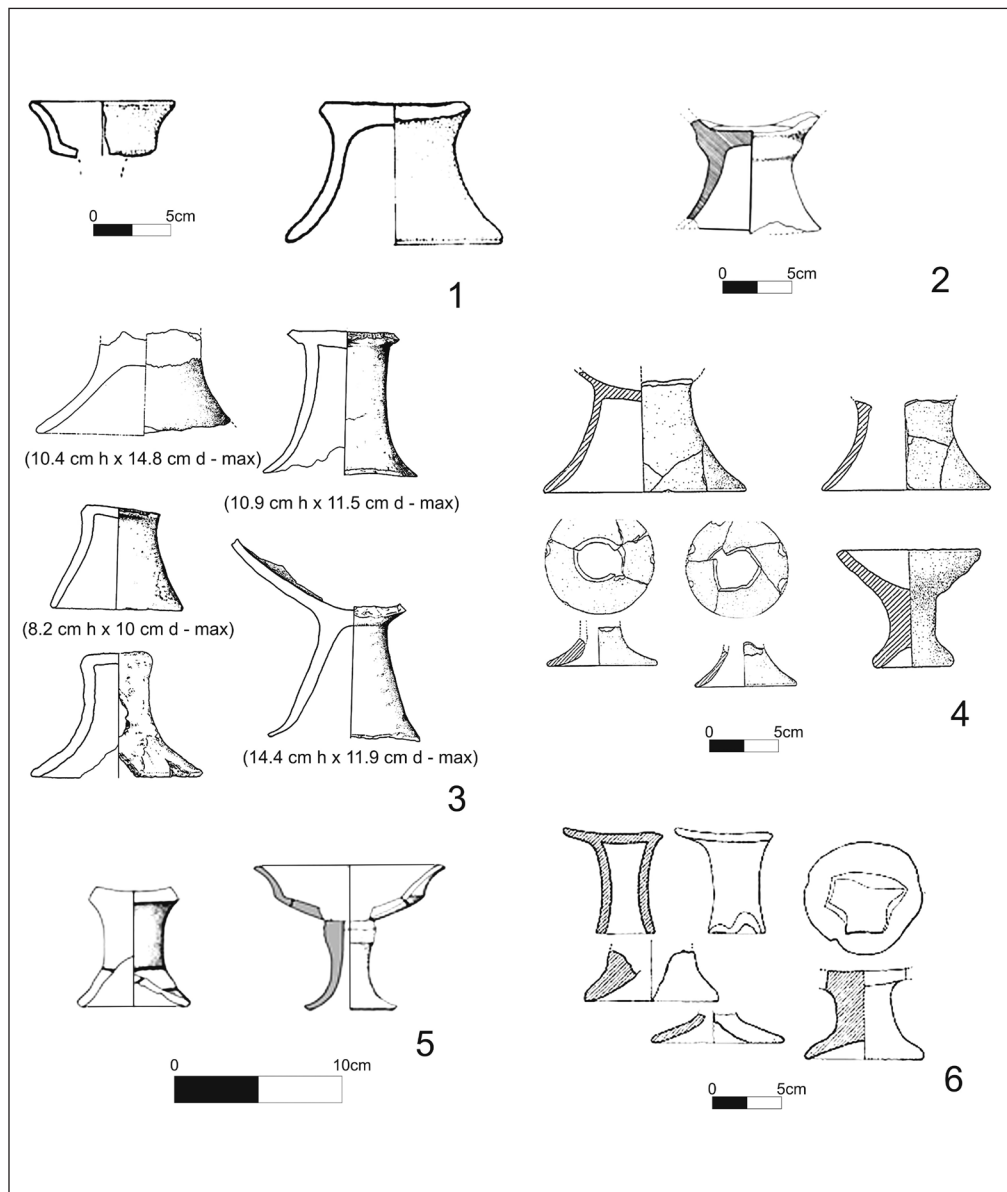


Fig. 6.3: Footed cups from Nuragic Sardinia (1. Rovina 2002, 18, fig. 3, nos. 1 & 2; 2. Ferrerese Ceruti, 1997 [1962], fig. 83; 3. Fadda, 1992, 79, tab. I, nos. 1-5; 4. Caputa 2003, 97 fig. III, nos. 28-32; 5. Fadda & Posi 2006, 86, fig 59, 93, fig. 66; 6. Bafico and Rossi, 1988, 117, fig. 28).

(as at Nuraghe Funtana (Ittireddu)) (Galli 1991). This suggests that whilst in Sardinia they were closely connected to rituals of social engagement and commensality, in Etruria they had a different use related to individuals and with an emphasis on the container

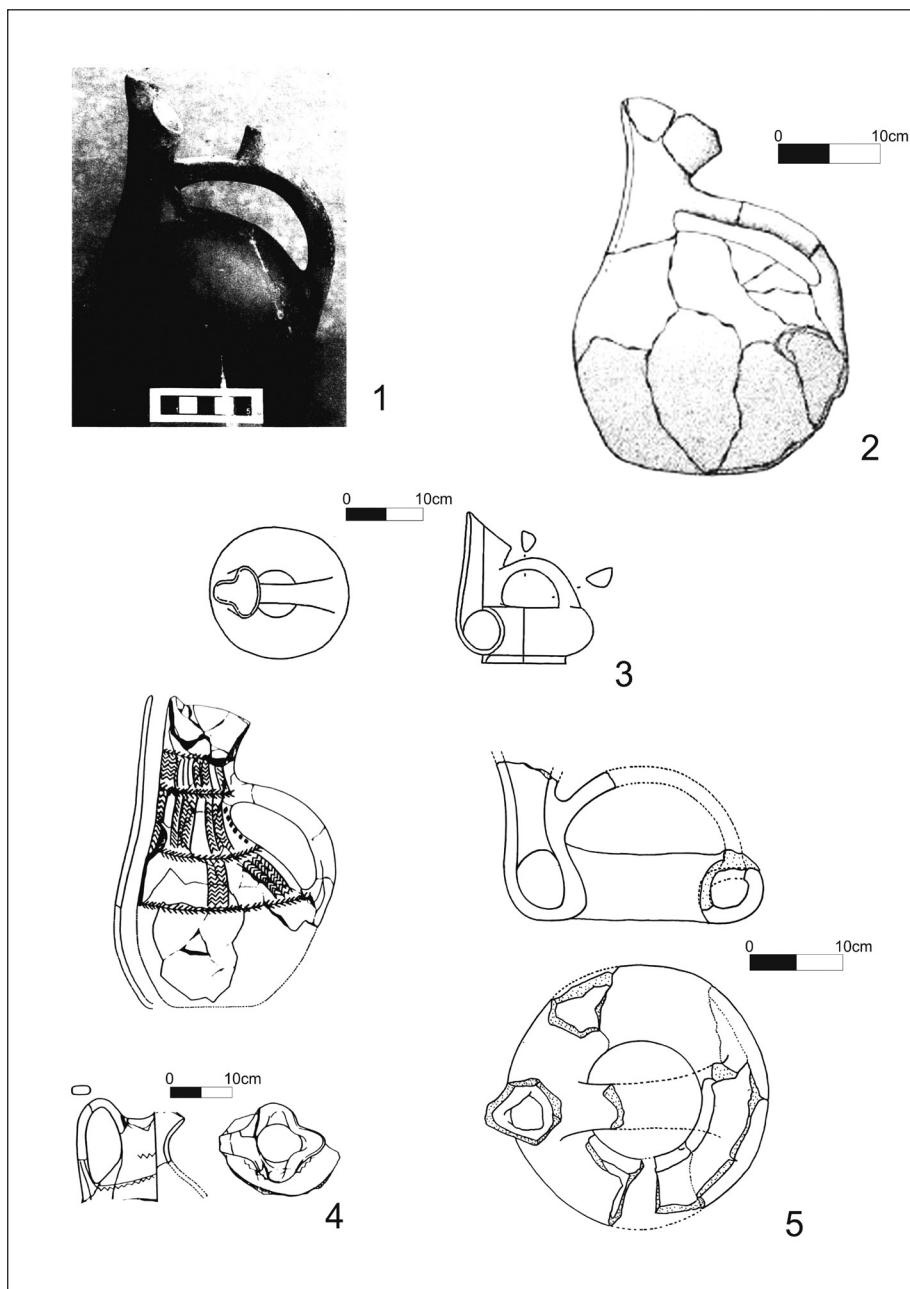


Fig. 6.4: Iron Age askoid jugs (1. Lo Schiavo 1978, 447; 2. Fadda & Posi 2006, 94, fig. 67, 3. Sebis 2007, fig. 13 no. 5; 4. & 5. Ugas, 1985, 147, tab. XVI, no. 1, 141, tab. X, nos. 1 & 3).

or its content rather than with rituals of drinking or libations. Those from Spain still lack good contexts but may have had similar functions to those in Sardinia in being particularly associated with sanctuary or ritual/cultic areas.

Iron Age sanctuaries

IA sanctuaries were an important part of the LBA/EIA Sardinian society and several, especially in the north and central-east of the island, developed and increased their importance through the first half of the first millennium BC (Nurdòle, Santa Vittoria, Sa Sedda 'e sos Carros, S'Arcu 'e is Forros, Abini, Gremanu) (see Fig. 6.1). These cultic spaces were areas of assembly for the local communities. Their functions can be gauged through their organisation; their architecture allowed or restricted access to certain parts and separated participants from the priestly hierarchy, while at the same time allowing for the demonstration and consolidation of group identities as people came together to perform communal activities and rituals. They acted as repositories for bronze hoards and votive offerings. The wells, water channels, basins and fountains involved people in kinetic and participative functions which drew the different local communities together in collective actions. That feasting was an important aspect of the communal actions is demonstrated by the variety of containers for conserving foodstuffs or holding liquids. Serra Niedda, a small water sanctuary on the north Sardinian coast, provides good examples of these types of material culture. The most common types of vessels are askoid jugs and carinated bowls, found also at the bottom of the well, suggesting a ritual as well as practical function (Rovina 2002, 10). Bowls, carinated or not, no doubt had a variety of uses, from everyday eating or drinking to more ritual uses for libations and offerings. These actions were immortalised in some bronze figurines which depict offerings being made of grain and other foodstuffs and (from Monte Sirai) libations using askoid jugs and bowls (Bernardini and Botto 2010, 51, 53; Lilliu 2008 [1966], 120, 122, 140). Other types of material associated with conservation of liquids and drinking are piriform vases, again often elaborately decorated, the abovementioned footed cups as well as cooking pans, large storage jars for grain and other foodstuffs, basins, bowls and jugs which suggest the kind of communal feasting activities that took place there (Rovina 2002, 17–19) (see Fig. 6.2). By bringing different groups of people together, the members of the communities affirmed their social identities by participating in the rituals that took place in the sanctuary itself.

In the IA there is evidence that the communal cultic aspects of Nuragic sites were expanded. A good example is the nuraghe Nurdòle, which changed its function from a nuraghe, perhaps hosting a family or a small group, to a communal ritual site demonstrated by the construction of a large external lustral basin which was fed by a water source through a channel that pierced the nuraghe's wall (Fadda 1990; 1991). Changes found at other sanctuary sites (Romanzesu, S'Arcu 'e is Forros), suggest the increasing importance of cultic places in the IA for the communal engagement in ritual activities at the sites. The large storage jars, askoid jugs and carinated bowls would have been used to store, pour and consume drinks and food

as part of feasting rituals. Increased wealth through metalworking on such sites no doubt affected power balances within the communities, which would have been mediated through these local rituals of feasting and commensality.

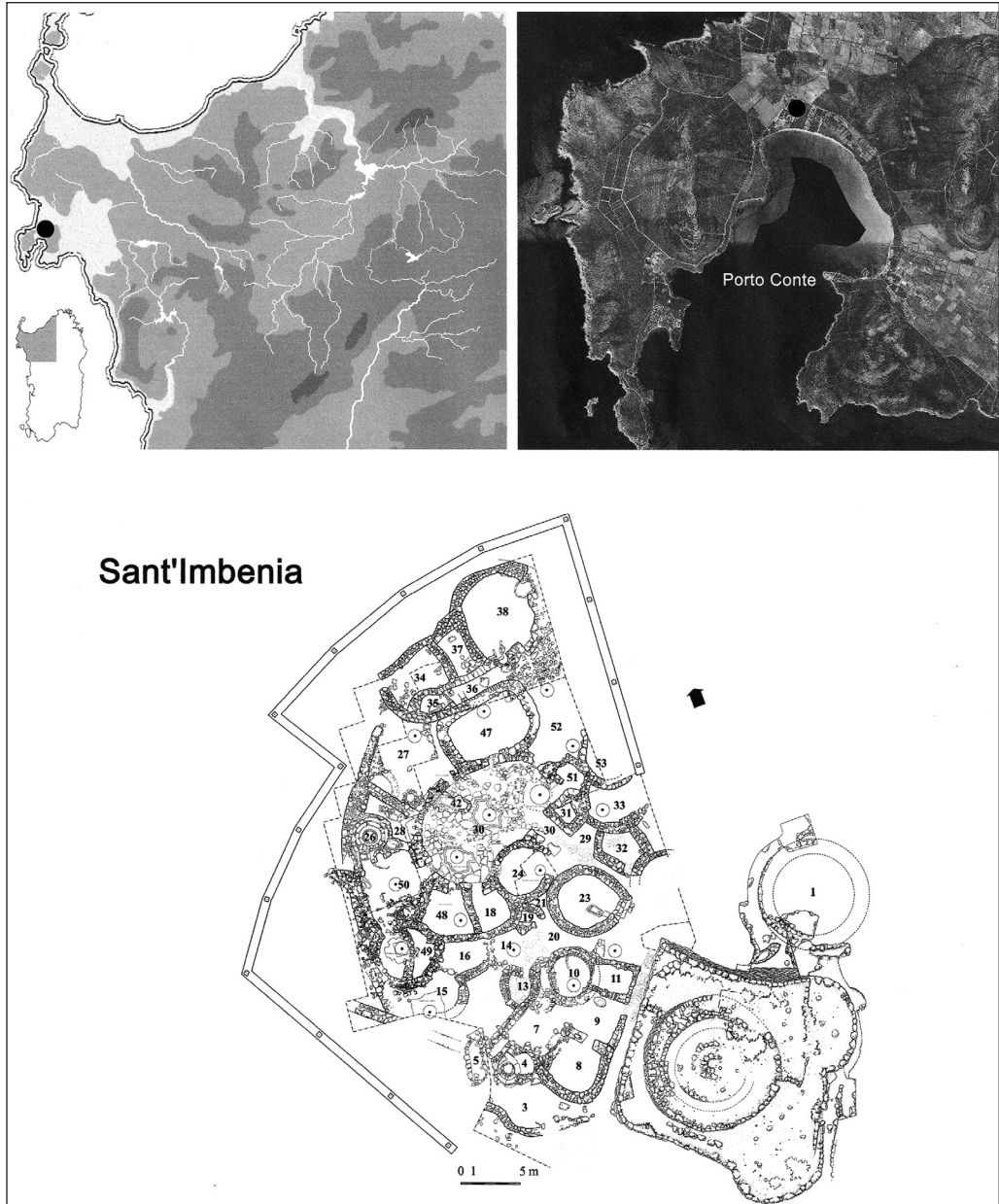


Fig. 6.5: Sant'Imbenia (Rendeli and de Rosa 2010, 11).

Foreign contact and materiality

The IA also saw an increase in the importation of foreign objects and consequent material entanglements in both sanctuary sites and villages. Drinking may have been an important aspect of these encounters as some of the earliest foreign material evidence found in IA Sardinia involved drinking containers. At Sant'Imbenia, a large Nuragic village located on the north-west coast of Sardinia on the trade routes between Spain and the Italian mainland (Fig. 6.5), ninth and eighth century BC foreign material included Euboean and Greek skyphoi, cups and Phoenician table and drinking ware (jugs, cups, plates and cooking pots) (Bernardini *et al.* 1997, 232–34; de Rosa 2013; Oggiano 2000). The presence of a Samarian cooking pot, partly-wheel and partly-handmade hybrid amphorae, and tableware suggests not just material but also physical contact with foreign peoples at this gateway site, which offered access to the fertile plains of the Nurra hinterland. The fact that much of the foreign material refers to the materiality of drink implies that this social practice was shared by local and foreign peoples, involving occasions of hospitality.

Hospitality is one of the most prevalent drinking occasions in any society (Heath 2000, 172). As seen with the Newfoundland longshoremen, it can have multi-layered political meanings for creating dependency, paying off debts and creating networks of contact. Hospitality is especially important when it involves the consumption of alcohol, organised with the aim of creating and maintaining relationships. Objects of hospitality are also fundamental, as finely made and richly decorated drinking vessels were important in order to create dependencies and relationships in the ancient Mediterranean world. The presence of askoid jugs in Villanovan graves suggests that similar practices were active between Sardinia and the Italian mainland.

The presence of foreign material culture on indigenous sites does not necessarily mean that the local inhabitants were assimilating foreign practices, nor that they were in direct contact with their originators, but that the material culture had meaning for the local inhabitants. At times the presence of foreign material on indigenous sites can be related to diacritic drinking habits, whereby local elites signal their affiliation with foreign cultural practices; at others the intrinsic meaning of foreign material culture was often changed to give it local significance. As Wright (2004, 22) points out, '... for the symbolic meaning of foreign items to be transferred into a community, it must be expressed in a familiar material code.' The material code of drinking containers was a medium that facilitated this process. This is suggested by 'imitation' ware and changes in the forms and manufacturing techniques of local material found at many of the indigenous Sardinian sites. For example, in several instances IA carinated bowls with their open shapes, use of red slip and wheel-turned construction show influences from Phoenician techniques. These entanglements can result in 'hybrid' shapes such as the wheel-made footed cup from the Nuragic sanctuary of Romanzesu (see Fig. 6.3:5). The fact that the manufacture of this (probably) ritual vessel draws upon both local and foreign practices suggests the

central importance of drinking or ritual practices within contexts of interactions between different groups of people. Examples of this fusion of local and foreign material also come from many other sites, e.g. Posada, Santu Antine, S'Urachi and Sant'Imbenia, where the developments in the shapes of the carinated bowls and other material suggests close contacts between the local and Phoenician communities. Furthermore, foreign manufacturing techniques (use of the wheel) or decoration, red slip for traditional carinated bowls and askoid jugs suggest how the early stages of contact interactions were mediated through the familiar material culture associated with rituals and drink.

The primary motivation for contact at Sant'Imbenia, and other sites like Posada, seems to have been trade. The 'hybrid' (so-called Sant'Imbenia) amphorae that were created at the eponymous site during the early period of contact with Phoenician merchants closely resemble the Phoenician transport amphorae of the same period and must have functioned as transport vessels. Their presence in Spain and Carthage suggest that the foundation of Phoenician settlements in these two places stimulated the local communities to develop their pre-existing Mediterranean trade networks (Botto 2007a; Docter 2007, 618; Fundoni 2009). Indeed, Sant'Imbenia amphorae are found during the early stages of Carthage's existence, which suggests that their contents were especially important during the period that Carthage was still developing. Once the Phoenicians had created their own networks, they were less dependent on trade with Sardinia (Bechtold and Docter 2010). Hosting foreign groups and performing drinking rituals would have been a way of cementing and deepening these trading contacts.

As well as the coastal habitation sites, foreign material culture was also introduced into the IA sanctuaries. One class of objects that can be related to drinking practices are a series of bronze cauldrons and basins (Fig. 6.6). Originally from the eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus or the Levant (Bernardini and Botto 2010, 84–85; Lo Schiavo *et al.* 1985, 30–35; Matthäus 2001, 165–69), they are widely found in the LBA/IA Mediterranean and were the most important elite display objects in the Orientalising period of the western Mediterranean (Bartoloni *et al.* 2012, 237–39; Riva 2010b, 56). Jugs and chalices in Villanovan and Etruscan contexts are often associated with individual burials (Vetulonia – Circolo del Tridente and Poggio alle Birbe (Cygielman and Pagnini 2002, 406, plate II)), whilst in Sardinia they are found in the large sanctuaries (Sant'Anastasia, Sa Sedda 'e sos Carros, S'Arcu 'e is Forros and Serra Orrios) and are related to contexts of rituals and communal interaction.

As with the developments in the manufacture of the carinated bowls and jugs, the incorporation and manufacture of these bronze bowls and cauldrons within the local *habitus* can be read as part of the changes taking place in the IA. Foreign material was appropriated into local practices as a way of underlining the differences in the identities of different components of the communities and the associative and diacritic aspects of drinking. Concurrently, the foreign object was 'indigenised' by the local communities. Their size and open form meant that they

proto-historic societies in the western Mediterranean before the advent of Phoenician traders who brought with them wine drinking practices from the near East (McGovern 2012, 148–49). In Sardinia, the placing of local beverages into prestigious bronze containers would have increased their value in society (Bartoloni *et al.* 2012, 217–18). The fact that they were associated with ritual or cultic sites and found in communal spaces rather than with individuals suggests that they were associated with group values of the community. Their use as food or drink containers suggests that local hosts provided these in exchange for services or labour, or to cement their positions in the evolving IA world. At the same time, considering their location, they probably had a ritual function which emphasised the shared identities while at the same time showing marked differences from the traditional Nuragic material culture which implied that they were prestige items to be admired by the communities that visited the sites. Finally the communal aspect of drinking that was implied by these cauldrons differs from the individual and warrior identity of the BA material culture of individual cups and jugs, suggesting changes in local ideologies at that time.

The material culture of drink in the later Iron Age

Bronze cauldrons were a new and limited form of material culture associated with the Nuragic sanctuaries and communal identities in the EIA. Another, slightly later, type of material culture related to drinking is the foreign oinochoai (wine jugs) and kantharoi (drinking cups) on indigenous sites, which appear with increasing frequency in the late eighth/seventh centuries BC. These are found on both cultic and habitation sites, and demonstrate the increasing contact between local and foreign societies from the seventh century BC onward. The fact that in their original contexts these containers were used for holding and pouring wine has often been used to suggest that they had the same function in Sardinia. Yet as with other containers, they needed to be relevant to the local communities. Their selection and use may have related to local drinking practices rather than the introduction of foreign ones. The evidence of askoid jugs on mainland Italy show that containers for liquids had symbolic value for both Sardinians and their cultural and trading partners of Villanovan and early Etruscan communities. Strikingly, it is only with the arrival of Phoenician traders that drinking vessels are found on Sardinian sites. There is some evidence of the indigenisation of foreign oinochoai and other drinking vessels into local prestige items from the singular production of a bronze askoid with Orientalising motifs from Nuraghe Ruju (D'Orlando 2011), a bronze cup from Su Igante (Uri) and bronze askoids from Sa Sedda and Nurdòle (Fadda 2014; Lo Schiavo 2002, 123; Madau 1991; Nicosia 1981, 460) which can be linked to Etruscan and Phoenician types. Appadurai points out that luxury items, i.e. those limited to certain elites, are closely associated with the 'body, person and personality' of the people who consume them (1986a, 38), suggesting that the identities of the emerging Etruscan and Sardinian elites were closely connected to the consumption of askoid jugs and their contents.

In Sardinia, the increase in the number of foreign oinochoai and transformations in the typologies of local material suggests that there was prestige attached to the possession of these new and foreign forms. As well as the creation of local bronzes, foreign influence can be felt in the local ceramic typologies. For example, the traditional ceramic askoid jugs usually had oblique or rounded mouths, but trefoil mouthed askoids, seemingly based on foreign prototypes, make an appearance at different sites in the EIA: e.g. at Santa Cadrina, Romanzesu and Santu Antine in the north (Madau 1988, 251), and at Sardara, Monastir (Monte Olladiri), Genna Maria (Villanovaforru) in the centre and south. Some trefoil-mouthed ring askoids from Su Cungiau 'e Funtà (Nuraxinieddu) and Santu Brai (Furtei), dated to the late seventh/early sixth century BC based on comparisons to ring askoi from Etruscan tombs at Populonia and Poggio Buco which have been dated to the late seventh/mid-sixth century BC (Bartoloni 1972, 35, fig. 38; Pacini 1981, 147; Sebis 2007, 342–43; Ugas 1985, 44), also seem to demonstrate the knowledge of foreign (Etruscan) types and designs (see Fig. 6.6). Thus, practices of wheel-turning pottery and hammering bronze used to create some of these new designs appeared in the IA and suggest the appropriation of new techniques into the local repertoire. At the same time, areas closely associated with foreign contact and settlement still retained interest in local drinking vessels or containers. At the indigenous site of Santa Brai (Furtei), examples of bucchero (oinochoai and kantharoi and Ionian cups) were found alongside local Nuragic pottery, whilst at Nuraghe Sirai (Carbonia), a Nuragic site which hosted a mixed population of Phoenicians and Sardinians in the second half of the seventh and first half of the sixth century BC, local and foreign material is found together. Foreign material is prominent at this mixed site, with 70% of the material referring to Rasmussen 3e kantharoi. Indeed, kantharoi are the most commonly found Etruscan material in Sardinia (Santocchini Gerg 2014). Looking further north, the most common foreign material from the seventh/sixth centuries BC are Etruscan jugs and cups, as at Santu Antine, Perfugas, Sirilò and Soroeni, which contained oinochoai, kantharoi and Ionian cups (D'Oriano 1999; Fadda 2008).

In their original settings (Etruria and Attic Greece) these objects are associated with the consumption of wine and the rituals of the symposium and banquet, and appear alongside other material culture such as ladles, mixing vessels and dippers. In other 'colonial' settings such as the south of France, kantharoi and wine amphorae are the main imports between the seventh and later sixth centuries BC, demonstrating that wine consumption and import rapidly became an important part of daily life in the region (Dietler 2010, 207–209).

In Sardinia the picture is quite different, because, in spite of the presence of bucchero drinking containers at Santu Brai and Nuraghe Sirai (as well as other indigenous localities), there is little complementary evidence of Etruscan transport amphorae. Those found at Nuraghe Sirai are Phoenician (Perra 2005, 191–92; 2007, 111) and need not have contained only wine. Late Phoenician and Punic examples (sixth century BC onward) from Pani Loriga (Santadi) and Santa Giusta lagoon (Oristano)

demonstrate that amphorae also contained meat and fish products as well as perhaps cheese, nuts and fruit (Botto and Oggiano 2011; Del Vais and Sanna 2012). The population of Nuraghe Sirai was probably one of mixed Sardinian and Phoenician as demonstrated by the variety of material culture found from a known stratigraphic layer in hut 2 which comprised c. 75% Phoenician and 25% of local tradition (Perra, C. 2012, 278). The Etruscan material, therefore, is likely to have arrived via Phoenician vectors. The presence of Etruscan material in Sardinia has commonly been assumed the result of a return trade for Phoenicians dealing with the Tyrrhenian coastal cities (Santocchini Gerg 2014; Tronchetti 1988, 62). This view that archaic trade was controlled by Phoenicians, or indeed was organised along ethnic lines at all, has recently been subject of debate with the suggestion that trade was organised by small entrepreneurs, possibly including crews of local indigenous populations, (Dietler 2010, 138–44; Riva 2010a, 216). If this was the case, it would fit in nicely with the evidence of domestic Nuragic material being found alongside Phoenician and Greek material in Spain and north Africa, suggesting that ships crews were groups of heterogeneous ethnicities (D’Oriano 2012; Gonzalez de Canales *et al.* 2006). It highlights the fact that ethnic factors were not as important when selecting foreign material culture as the value assigned to the item itself by the local communities. As much of the bucchero was found in an area given over (at least in Nuragic times) to a ritual use, this suggests that the ritual aspect of drinking was, as in the evidence from the earlier sanctuaries discussed above, an important aspect of the forging and negotiating of local identities in periods of greater connectivity.

Conclusions

Drink preparation and consumption are not solely a way of satisfying bodily needs but have powerful social meanings for communities. On one level, the communal consumption of alcohol is an important socially-constructed practice wherein the participating local identities are created and reinforced. On another, drinking and hospitality are tools for mediating new power relationships between different groups, and justify new organisational strategies since alcohol production and distribution often require organizational skills, wealth and power (Dietler 1996; Hamilakis 1999, 40–41; Vives-Ferrándiz 2008).

In Sardinia, evidence for drinking in LBA/EIA Nuragic communities is found at many sites, but the large water sanctuaries of the north and centre of the island are especially important. Ritual drinking practices were key means of creating and maintaining identities, and rituals were ways of formularising traditions, especially in periods of change (Bell 1997, 147–48). Evidence of changes to local rituals can be found in the drinking cups and bronze cauldrons, as well as in the extension and growth in importance of several of the sanctuaries in the IA. People appealed to traditions, even those that were newly created, in order to reaffirm their identities. As Hazan (1987) and Heath (2000) suggest, drinking rituals are a

way of affirming identity in a changing world. The fact that these changes took place within the indigenous cultic sites suggests that these inventions of tradition were ideological changes in which new patterns and identities were accommodated within the field of ritual.

The later seventh century evidence from Nuraghe Sirai suggests that the ritual arena was one where identities were negotiated. Here, foreign Phoenician and Etruscan material was found in association with Nuragic and 'hybrid' domestic pottery (C. Perra 2012, 282). The presence of Etruscan kantharoi on a predominantly Phoenician/Nuragic site suggests that these cups symbolised particular values for the Mediterranean communities in the form of contact amongst them. The fact that IA Sardinia was already producing 'hybridized' vessels shows that the customs of Etruscan and Phoenician traders were not unknown to them. Whilst drinking vessels were associated with ritual actions, the presence of hybrid domestic cooking vessels demonstrates that identities were changing in daily life. The local inhabitants of the site were no longer solely 'Nuragic' but rather were altering their consumption practices whilst continuing to keep hold of references to the past. The presence of foreign drinking containers such as Etruscan kantharoi and Greek drinking cups are also notable. They are often recognised as symbols of increasingly stratified societies and may have implied ideological changes as they replaced, to some extent, the Nuragic carinated bowls and chalices in areas of greater contact.

In this discussion my examples focused on three different areas of Sardinia, spanning a period between the ninth and seventh/sixth centuries BC. The material culture on these different sites shows that the local communities were interested in foreign material culture when it was relevant to their own socio/political environment, in this case the consumption of alcohol and other beverages. The differing social practices came together in situations of culture contact, leading to modifications and hybridizations of the identities of the communities who lived there.

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Chapter 7

Impressions at the Edge: Belonging and Otherness in the Post-Viking North Atlantic

Elizabeth Pierce

(Affiliate Researcher, University of Glasgow)

Abstract

Unlike many examples in which material symbols of identity are used to delineate boundaries between ethnic groups, the Norse living in the North Atlantic c. AD 1150–1450 aimed to demonstrate their inclusion in a wider European – and Christian – society using material culture. Considered to be located at the far edge of the known world in the Middle Ages, and largely dependant on outsiders for maritime transportation, the people in the North Atlantic were in danger of being perceived as socially-tabooed ‘others’ unless they could convince the relatively small number of outsiders who came to their shores otherwise. The strategies which the inhabitants of the different North Atlantic settlements adopted in order to maintain their European identity becomes especially clear when the material culture practices of Iceland and the Faroe Islands are compared with the relatively more distant communities of Greenland. This paper will focus especially on the clothing, church architecture and cultural practices of the region, three categories which are highly visible from a distance but could be subtly altered to fit local conditions. It can be argued that the greater the distance from mainland Europe, the harder communities worked to create this façade that outsiders would perceive as part of their own cultural milieu. A failure to convince the outside world that they were good Christians (and thereby, Europeans) could result in a loss of social, economic and religious contacts.

Keywords: *North Atlantic, Greenland, otherness, medieval Christianity, Norse*

Most Western discourses of identity ... are predicated upon some unconscious projection of an Other who is not 'us'

Kearney 2003, 72

When the Vikings first arrived in the islands of Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands in the ninth and tenth centuries AD, they settled empty landscapes that precluded colonial encounters. Contrary to medieval written sources, these settlers were part of a multicultural group who proceeded to form communities that survived for centuries, hundreds or even thousands of miles from their ancestors' homelands. Cultural change is inevitable over that scale of time, yet these societies are sometimes seen as nothing more than outposts of a Norwegian empire, desperate to eke out an existence in a harsh landscape. However, comparisons of material culture, architecture and cultural practices on a regional scale suggest that each area within the North Atlantic was culturally distinct with an eye toward *inclusion* within a wider European cultural milieu, and that many of the assumptions about identity in the North Atlantic in the Middle Ages are actually rooted in the present day.

This paper will examine the expression of identity by the Norse in the North Atlantic region in several aspects of their lives, including ecclesiastical architecture, social practice and the material culture of everyday life. Religion dominated the lives of medieval Europeans, defining geographical boundaries and wielding the power to include or exclude people or communities based on a perception of 'Otherness'. In her survey of recent studies into the exotic in medieval art and literature, Strickland (2008, 69) writes:

... we can observe that medieval engagement with the exotic as a constructed idea facilitated self-identity, controlled cultural fears, aided the process of colonization, normalized the strange (in order to conceptualize the unfamiliar), and problematized the familiar (in order to critique or question received Christian practices)

For those living in the North Atlantic, the church, represented by monumental architecture, would have not only provided them with a direct line of communication to Europe but also a tacit acceptance that allowed them to participate in European culture and commerce. Material culture such as clothing and accessories would have represented other important visible displays of identity, both for the inhabitants of the North Atlantic and the outsiders who travelled to their shores.

Background and approaches to the North Atlantic

The life of the average person in the North Atlantic in the post-Viking period would have included less long-distance sea travel than that of their predecessors: by the thirteenth century, only one ocean-going ship is recorded as being owned by an Icelander, the poet Snorri Sturluson (Thorláksson 1999, 85). Instead, they relied upon outsiders coming to their shores to provide transportation and trade, attracted by the prospect of profit from walrus ivory, polar bear skins, woollen fabric and dried fish. The journey could be hazardous:

between 1169 and 1209 alone, the Icelandic annals record seven ships wrecked on their way to or from Greenland (Gad 1970, 104). If conditions were too dangerous, traders were unwilling to risk the loss of a ship and cargo in sea ice and storms. The Greenlanders, especially, could be cut off from the outside world for years at a time because of ice.

The North Atlantic and Scandinavia would have been brought together by shared religion and similar language and subsistence into a 'shared northern-ness' (Jones 1984, 2). Both the *Íslendingabók* and the *Landnámabók*, which detail the settlement of Iceland several centuries after the fact, say that the original settlers came from Norway, although more recent genetic work suggests a Hebridean/Irish origin for some settlers, especially a majority of women (Jones 1986, 143–44, 156; Helgason *et al.* 2001). These early twelfth-century documents were written in part to reinforce a Norwegian claim over the territories, and have today created the impression that the North Atlantic islands in the Middle Ages were mono-cultural societies belonging to a Norwegian 'homeland' (Urbańczyk 2004, 45). While these stories created an origin myth for the people of the North Atlantic, they have also coloured the way in which modern scholars view identity in the region.

For the first few centuries of their existence, the people of the North Atlantic lived in independent communities with local governance, still closely linked to Scandinavia and the British Isles through trade and social ties. In 1152/3, the North Atlantic churches joined the newly-created archbishopric in Nidaros (modern Trondheim) in Norway, strengthening connections with that country. The church provided important cultural links between the North Atlantic and the rest of Europe, especially as it promised continued lines of communication and another route of supply during times of economic downturn. By the 1260s all of the lands of the North Atlantic had submitted to the Norwegian crown, agreeing to abide by Norwegian laws, receive certain rights in Norway and agree to a royal trade monopoly in exchange for regular supply ships (Gad 1970, 120; Thorláksson 2000, 178). Religious and political contacts promised not only necessary imports and luxury goods but also news, ideas and cultural contacts from abroad.

Although the Middle Ages were a historic period, relatively little is recorded from this region. The few contemporary sources for the North Atlantic that do survive usually come down to us in later translations. *The King's Mirror*, *Historia Norwegie*, the Icelandic annals and other northern European annals were all recorded during the Middle Ages, yet they offer scant evidence of how the people living in the North Atlantic perceived themselves and their place in the wider world. Some of the author's observations in *The King's Mirror* on the kraken and other Icelandic whales, for example, are based as much on myth as reality, but his information on the Greenlanders' religion, trade, subsistence and landscape is fairly accurate. He mentions that the inhabitants raise cattle and sheep, make cheese and butter, export walrus tusks and walrus-skin rope, and he notes the existence of polar bears (Larson 1917, 142–45). Little is said about the people themselves except to say that those living in Greenland are few in number but all are Christian (Larson 1917, 144). Other

written sources repeat this pattern of prioritising Christian piety above all other characteristics attributed to individuals and communities.

Because the North Atlantic settlers found themselves in a unique situation for medieval Europeans – moving into largely, if not completely, uninhabited landscapes – the displays of identity, particularly ethnicity, would have had different motivations. Material culture would have been used less to promote the boundary between opposing groups (see Russell, Marín-Aguilera, this volume) and focused more on marking social cohesion. Certain cultural factors – origin, customs, language and law – were stressed by authors of the period and were important in daily interactions (Geary 1983, 15, 19). Failure to meet certain standards would have made one appear ‘uncivilised’. Consciously or subconsciously, a fear of being categorised as an ‘Other’ must have influenced their decisions about material culture and practise.

Acceptance as part of a social group was important, sometimes even for basic survival in the North Atlantic. Here, judgements transforming a person into an outlaw, seen as Other in terms of social status, could be a form of punishment. Serious offences in Iceland were often punished with varying degrees of outlawry, the most serious of which were essentially death sentences (Byock 1993, 28–29). This was a serious punishment, as being forced to live outside the boundaries of normal society – here with little hope for escape because of the surrounding sea – meant that criminals lost the group support necessary for survival in harsh environments. Lacking options, outlaws in Iceland were forced to live in underground hide-outs in lava caves such as Surtshellir, stealing livestock and crushing the bones to access every bit of nutritional value as they struggled to survive (Ólafsson *et al.* 2010, 294–95). Even in Icelandic sagas, the exile was a literary device used to show marginalisation and the alienation of people forced into it (Grove 2009, 34). While this may be a drastic comparison when applied on a community-wide scale in the North Atlantic, it illustrates the importance of inclusion based on certain social qualifications. Becoming marginalised from the rest of European society would have resulted in the reduction of secular and religious communication with the outside world and loss of access to imports such as grain and iron tools. Basic survival would still have been possible, but elites no longer would have been able to control resource allocation, and becoming ostracised would have cut off access to trade and the connections first portrayed in the region’s origin myths.

Being seen as Other was not always a bad thing – people or monsters perceived as exotic in medieval art and literature could be seen as intriguing and appealing as well as repulsive and fearsome (Strickland 2008, 60). For the people in the North Atlantic, especially Greenland, this factor of exoticness probably raised the value of the narwhal tusks, walrus tusks and other commodities they traded, and provided plenty of fodder for tales they could tell. However, the negative side of Otherness would have been a larger concern to them. Relying upon outside sources for most of their trade and off-island transportation meant that they were at the mercy of those they could attract to their shores with trade opportunities. Part of this included reassuring arrivals, through architecture and material culture, that the distance did not preclude the inhabitants from being good Christians and part of the same cultural group.

Christianity: the most important element?

Before Europe was defined by its modern geographical terms, it was understood to be an area demarcated by Christianity; indeed, religion came to define identity in the region. In a time period when life was uncertain and most people would have lacked experience of the wider world, Christianity offered a common experience that people across thousands of miles could relate to (Hall 2002, 26). Anyone considered to be Other – i.e. not Christian – would have faced a difficult time engaging in basic trade and social interaction. Indeed, the fourteenth-century theologian Heinrich von Hesler defined wild men, the epitome of the medieval embodiment of the Other, as human but so untamed (and thus unsuited to participating in society) that they had never heard the word of God (Bartra 1994, 113). In the North Atlantic, one of the most obvious and communal methods of expressing the connection with Christianity – and by extension society-at-large – was through church architecture and religious practise.

By outward appearances, the North Atlantic Norse, particularly the Greenlanders (Fig. 7.1), worked hard to match the rest of Europe in ecclesiastical structures even though their domestic architecture of low, organic-looking turf and stone buildings was more adapted to local conditions. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries became a time of active building and expansion for the church across much of northern Europe, resulting in large stone churches in prominent locations with standardised designs (Gilchrist 1969, 1; Brink 2004, 172–73). It is not clear why the North Atlantic communities became a part of this building programme despite their small populations and distance from cultural centres, but it might have been the will of the local bishops or the people themselves to prove that their far-flung dioceses were still an active part of the Christian world. In Greenland, especially, the result was a notable number of large stone and/or wood churches such as the one still upstanding at Hvalsey (Fig. 7.2) built to serve small, dispersed communities (McGovern 1980, 264). The population of Greenland was much smaller than that of Iceland and was spread over a larger area of difficult terrain, yet unlike Iceland and the Faroe Islands most of the ecclesiastical buildings in Greenland were comparable in size to churches being built at the same time in Scandinavia (Nørlund 1924, 51). Inside, the churches were fitted out as any other in Europe, including bronze church bells and stained glass (Bruun 1918, 397; McGovern 1980, 58). Procuring such furnishings from mainland Europe would have taken a great deal of time, effort and expense on the part of the Greenlanders, but it must have been considered a worthy investment.

The building programme had varying results across the North Atlantic, which may be due to differing strategies of contact and identity. In contrast to Greenland, the Faroe Islands had only one major stone church built: a large stone cathedral dedicated to St Magnus built at Kirkjubøur (Fig. 7.3) in the late thirteenth century in the Gothic style popular at that time (Dahl 1968, 188; Arge 1989, 26). Aside from being the only church of this magnitude in the Faroes, what makes this well-preserved, upstanding building so intriguing is the debate surrounding whether or not the structure was ever completely finished. The walls still stand complete today, yet there is little evidence of

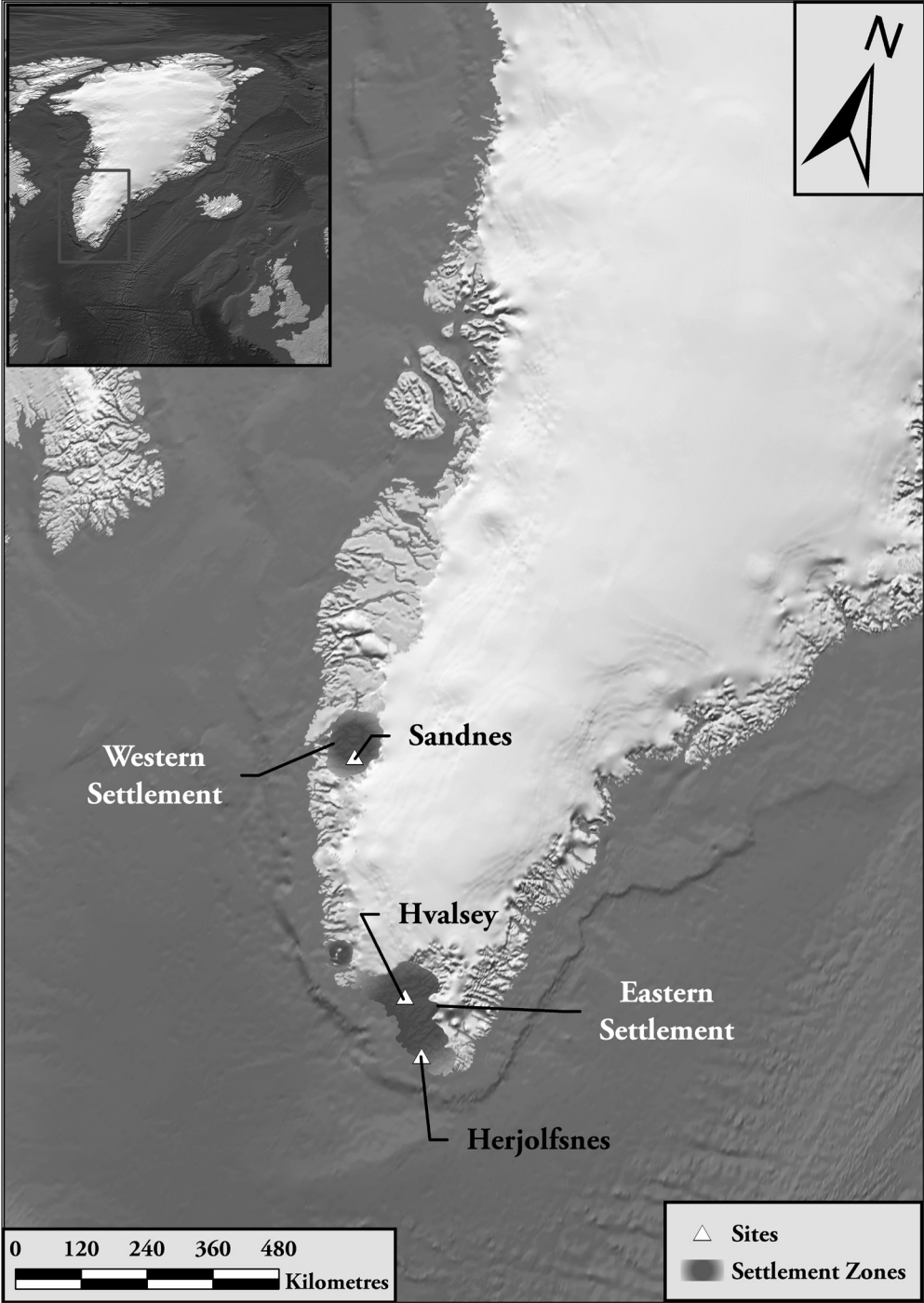


Fig. 7.1: Map of Greenland with the Norse settlements (map by Ryan K. McNutt).



Fig. 7.2: Remains of the church at Hvalsey (photo courtesy Colleen Batey).



Fig. 7.3: East end of St Magnus Cathedral and nearby church, Kirkjubøur, Faroe Islands (photo courtesy Colleen Batey).



Fig. 7.4: Consecration cross installed in St Magnus Cathedral (photo courtesy Colleen Batey).

use. Dahl (1965, 141; 1968, 188) argued that the cathedral may have been consecrated but it was certainly never completed, based on a lack of interior burials, a roof, flooring or altars in the interior (Dahl 1965, 10; 1968). But Krogh (1988, 79–90) suggested that this is a twentieth-century misconception, arguing that at least part of the structure had been roofed at one time. Consecration crosses (Fig. 7.4) had been installed, but any furnishings other than stone details are not in evidence. A small chapel on the north side may have been finished, but it is not clear whether the rest of the church was ever used despite being somewhat incomplete (Dahl 1968, 188; Krogh 1988, 90).

This large, ornate stone church went out of use almost as soon as it was built, abandoned in favour of an existing wooden church standing only a few dozen metres away. The circumstances which led to the abandonment have been long forgotten, but the event does not appear to have caused the Faroese to be perceived as an un-Christian Other. The Faroese act of rejecting the cathedral after so many resources had gone into its construction must have seemed audacious to the church hierarchy, but it was tolerated. Bishops were buried in the nearby wooden church almost immediately: the coffin of one grave containing a gilded crosier dated to 1260 ± 100 years (Dahl 1968, 190). Although written sources are few for the Faroe Islands at this time, their piety seems to have received less scrutiny than that of the Greenlanders. As the Faroe Islands are located on the sailing route to Iceland and Greenland, perhaps the regular communication and traffic kept residents from facing the same perceptions of Otherness.



Fig. 7.5: Wood and turf church at Viðmýri in Iceland (author's photo).

Iceland's situation more closely resembled that of the Faroes, again perhaps the result of more frequent contact. No Icelandic churches survive from the Middle Ages, although archaeological and written sources have shown that major Icelandic churches were built of timber – a valuable commodity in a nearly treeless landscape – including the cathedrals at Skálholt and Hólar (Nørlund 1936, 34; Stefánsson 1997, 31). Most churches, though, remained small wood and turf structures located on important farms, similar to those still found today such as the nineteenth-century church at Viðmýri (Fig. 7.5), rather than as monuments. Some churches can also be linked with external trade and the expression of status. At the medieval trading site of Gásir in northern Iceland, it has been suggested that the wooden church had been built by foreign merchants to display their own religious piety and to impress the local Icelanders with their wealth (Vésteinsson 2006, 18). There were no burials in the churchyard, but rather ironworking and discarded pottery, cloth and food waste surrounded the three successive phases of the church (Vésteinsson 2008, 61, 65). The local Icelanders did not utilise it aside from seasonal worship alongside the foreign merchants, highlighting the marginal position of the site. This investment in monumental architecture suggests the foreign merchants had a history at Gásir and a vested interest in continuing trade there. Here, too, Christianity was a necessary part of social interactions on both sides.

What role, then, did religion play in identity in this period? From the perspective of church officials considering the North Atlantic from afar, these peripheral dioceses could not have been their priority despite the importance of Christianity in everyday life. For the inhabitants of the North Atlantic, religious observances were acts of personal devotion that required individual adherence and strengthened community coherence

through general participation. But were the North Atlantic Norse as pious as their architecture suggests? Many religious practises common elsewhere in Europe might have been difficult in the North Atlantic, where resources and church oversight were more limited. Foods which dominated the North Atlantic diet, such as dairy products and meat from domestic and marine mammals, were banned on fast days (Gad 1970, 84; Dennis *et al.* 1980, 48–50). It is not clear whether the devout in the North Atlantic received dispensation to eat banned foods on fast days such as seals and cheese. Piously observing the frequent fasting days would have been extremely difficult given their caloric needs and limits in choice of foods. Perhaps they simply chose to alter their fasting practices without official approval (Pierce 2008, 100–101), which might have led to the perception of flaunting church doctrine. To an outsider unfamiliar with the challenges of living in the North Atlantic, the local inhabitants' diet could have been seen as unholy or sacrilegious, pushing them toward the boundaries of acceptable social etiquette.

A reputation for not conforming to social norms in diet and other elements of religious life may be part of the reason that the people in various parts of the North Atlantic were sometimes labelled as difficult to deal with in religious and political matters (Arneborg 1991, 146–47; Keller 1991, 128), further complicating the relationship between the population centres of Europe and the North Atlantic. Unlike Iceland, the Greenland church only had foreign bishops, who would have been unfamiliar with the country when they bothered to show up at all. Bishops were present in Greenland for just 106 years between 1123 and 1378 (Arneborg 1991; McGovern 2000, 338), the rest never travelling to their diocese, meaning Greenland had less direct church oversight. Thus, the country's reputation was based on second- or third-hand accounts. Church officials believed that the Greenlanders could not maintain proper Christianity without the presence of a bishop to guide them (Gad 1970, 180), which for centuries led to authors questioning their piety, and therefore their place within a wider European context.

From the very beginning of the Greenland settlements, the inhabitants faced an uphill battle to prove their Christian devotion. Already in the late tenth or early eleventh century clergy in Bremen stated, 'The population in Greenland call themselves Christians, it is true, but verily without faith, without confession and without baptism, and while being Christians they worship Odin and Thor' (Nørlund 1936, 30). After the last recorded wedding took place at Hvalsey church in 1408, witnesses then living in Iceland were called in 1414 and again in 1424 to testify that proper church protocol had been followed (Arneborg 2000, 316). This scepticism continued after contact was lost with the Norse colonies in Greenland in the early fifteenth century: it was the religious well-being of the Greenland Norse that worried kings and clerics more than their basic survival. In 1448, Pope Michael V wrote to the bishops of Iceland asking them to send bishops and priests to Greenland (Urbańczyk 1992, 76). Greater than the fear that the population had died out was the fear that they were no longer Christian, that through their isolation and contact with 'heathen' Thule they had become the Other. Even in the sagas, the Icelanders viewed Greenland as a marginal location where questionable practises and supernatural events took place (Grove 2009, 32). While the Greenlanders went to great lengths to present themselves to the world as Christians, there was still room for doubt.

Material culture: new meanings and shaping identities

Trade, while still carried out on a smaller scale than elsewhere in Europe, was regular for the Faroese and Icelanders. Maintaining contact with political and economic centres was probably not a concern for them given the frequency and variety of contacts. But this distance which affected the perception of cultural affiliations in the North Atlantic also could change the meaning of objects and practices in the region. As mentioned above, while wood was a common building material elsewhere, its use in the construction of the Icelandic cathedrals symbolised the importance of the church in a treeless landscape. Likewise, items that were for everyday use elsewhere in Europe became status symbols because of the difficulty of obtaining them. Some of these imports took on new meanings and altered status in creating material links to other parts of Europe.

Ceramic vessels were being mass-produced in England and northern Europe at this time, so it is no surprise that such vessels are found in the North Atlantic, albeit on a much smaller scale than elsewhere. Because of the distance, rough seas and the difficulty in transporting the delicate vessels, importing ceramics must have been a challenge. We know from the mid-thirteenth-century text *The King's Mirror* that imports of all kinds to Greenland were expensive (Larson 1917, 142). Objects gain value when there is difficulty in obtaining them (Simmel 1978, 67), so the long sea voyages, dangerous sailing conditions and infrequency of contact would have increased the value of objects the farther they travelled. What was a common cookware vessel in a more populous area might have become high-status tableware, especially in Greenland and on more remote farms in Iceland. While someone living in England or Bergen could easily obtain a replacement Grimston jug, people in the North Atlantic might have to wait years to obtain a new one. Most importantly, an imported vessel would have reminded observers of the owner's wealth and the connections necessary to obtain such a vessel, plus elevate status and curate cultural links to the dining fashions in other parts of Europe.

Ceramic vessels also highlight the varying degrees of trade and contact among the various North Atlantic islands discussed previously. At the single Faroese farm site of Í Uppistovubeitinum on the island of Eysturoy, more than 230 sherds of pottery (not all yet identified) were found on a site occupied from the twelfth–fourteenth century (S. Arge, pers. comm.; site database). Fifty of these sherds have been identified as twelfth or thirteenth-century Danish or German in origin, especially Andenne and Paffrath wares, but no English material was identified (Arge 1997, 35, 37). In contrast, only 89 sherds were found in fourteenth-century layers in the entire Icelandic trading site of Gásir, which would have been one of the major entrepôts for imported pottery during that period (Brorsson 2009, 5). This includes five sherds of Spanish Maiolica from two vessels, which would have been an early type of this ware and rare enough in the north of Europe at this time to be considered a luxury good (Hurst 1977, 75; Brorsson 2009, 10). Further afield in Greenland, only a handful of imported sherds, perhaps representing one or two vessels per farm, survive. Even at Herjolfsnes, the southern-most farm in the Eastern Settlement and presumably one of the first ports-of-call for new arrivals,

only a single sherd identified as Rhenish stoneware was found next to the foundation of the dwelling-house (Nørlund 1924, 54, 221). Given the rarity of pottery in Greenland and the difficulty in obtaining it, this vessel – so common elsewhere in northern Europe – might have been the centrepiece during the entertainment of guests.

Aside from the tableware that would have been seen by neighbours and foreign guests alike, another important means of visually communicating identity and cultural affiliation on both personal and communal levels is through clothing. A person's wardrobe can be seen from a distance, and visible variations in the different elements of a person's dress (e.g. cut, colour, length) can influence an observer's perceptions about the wearer's origins and connections. Fortunately, permafrost in Greenland has helped to preserve dozens of gowns, hoods, stockings and other garments in medieval churchyards (Østergård 2004). The clothing is worn, suggesting that it was used in everyday life, unlike the royal or ecclesiastical garments usually preserved in museums.

No complete clothing survives from elsewhere in the North Atlantic which could illustrate regional differences, but the gowns, stockings, caps and liripipe hoods found at Herjolfsnes (Fig. 7.6) are similar in style to those seen in medieval paintings, manuscript illustrations and sculptures from all around Europe. As excavator Nørlund (1924, 132) initially assumed, and textile specialist Østergård (2004) later confirmed,



Fig. 7.6: Reconstruction of men's and women's clothing from medieval Greenland based on finds from Herjolfsnes and other sites (illustration by Christy McNutt).

the Herjolfsnes garments appear to have been constructed in Greenland using local fabrics. The larger pieces had multiple seams and gores – inserted panels of cloth for shaping and volume – a design that seems to be based on a pattern from abroad. Instead of cutting apart their large pieces of cloth and then sewing them back together to produce the proper lines of seams, the Greenlandic tailors simply added false seams to create the look of added gores for symmetry or to imitate fashion examples from elsewhere (Nørlund 1924, 92; Østergård 2004, 98; Netherton 2008, 148).

Since the clothing was locally-made using homespun fabric, people could have constructed any style of garment but consciously chose to imitate fashions they saw. Elements of pieces such as the liripipes, which hung down the backs of medieval hoods, served no discernible purpose yet were the height of fashion and thereby important enough to warrant the use of extra fabric. Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands were all wool-producing areas and were noted for the fabric woven at home by the women. Most people probably could not afford imported garments, but they carefully studied available examples and created identical pieces using local fabrics and their own construction techniques. Without close inspection, it would be difficult for a casual observer to see any differences between here and abroad in the way people were dressed, thereby creating a façade. If the Greenlanders in particular adopted any native Thule dress practices suited to the climate, the evidence has not survived. If they had done so, it would have been seen as a pagan practice, placing them firmly in the realm of the Other.

Accessories such as buckles and strap-ends do survive, but in the North Atlantic even they are not as common as in other areas. Annular brooches, for example, are one of the most common accessories found in medieval Europe – they were fairly standard in form and decoration across Europe with little identifiable regional variation (Deevy 1998, 39–40). Wearing such a brooch would not have linked its owner to a specific culture or area – just ‘Europe’. Although people may have varied their dress to demonstrate affiliation to a certain group in a way not visible in the archaeological record, it seems that accessories were used as a generic symbol of belonging to a group (i.e. Europe) rather than a more localised affiliation. Shoes, another constantly changing fashion accessory, have also been preserved. At the fourteenth-century trading site of Gásir in northern Iceland, several styles of shoes were found, including types from London and Bergen (Mould 2010, 49). Again, they were fashionable but their styling does not seem to have been specific to the location.

In the case of the Greenland, additional value gained by objects because of their material and distance from source occurred in both directions. The Greenlanders themselves raised the value of a common, mass-produced ceramic vessel to important tableware because of its rarity and the difficulty in obtaining one. In contrast, buckles made from walrus ivory have been found in Greenland (Østergård 2004, 110). Local inhabitants were replicating buckle styles from overseas with materials at hand – giving value to form rather than material – whereas outsiders would have prized the accessories made out of ivory – a luxury good (Pierce 2011, 103).

Discussion: belonging and otherness in the post-Viking North Atlantic

The identity of the 'civilized' has always been flanked by the image of the Other, [...] the common image of the Other as a wild and barbaric figure...

Bartra 1994, 3–4

Inferring ideas about identity from the archaeological record is always a difficult proposition. Each person in the North Atlantic had their own set of circumstances to shape their identity on multiple levels, from their social status and religious practises to gender and geographic location on a personal, community and regional level. The islands in the North Atlantic were distant lands in the minds of Norwegians, and Scandinavia, in turn, was seen as located on the periphery of the inhabited world (Bagge 2004, 355). But even within the North Atlantic there were regional differences. Icelanders may have portrayed Greenland as an isolated, otherworldly place in their literature in order to reassure themselves that there were far more marginal societies than their own (Grove 2009, 32–34, 46) – that they themselves were not the Other. Because of these perceptions of marginality, people who were seldom seen or heard from could easily take on aspects of an unknown Other in the minds of the majority. The physical distance could be bridged – at least culturally – by making one's traditions reflect practises like those that could be easily associated with 'common European culture' (Bagge 2004, 356) in an era in which political and geographical borders did not matter as much as religious and cultural ones. These affiliations could be best represented through material culture.

Greenland perhaps best illustrates the process of using material culture to represent a shared identity in the North Atlantic because it was the most distant medieval European settlement, and therefore had the most to prove. Urbańczyk (2000, 65–67) says the Greenlanders, '... defined their identity by European standards'. He sees them living in an isolated outpost in which they overcompensated in order to prove to themselves that they were members of a 'civilised' world. That is not to say that there was a united, pan-European culture to which everyone living there ascribed. Elements of social belief and material culture varied across the continent. However, the people of the North Atlantic did not stray far from types found elsewhere when it came to visually important elements of material culture such as clothing, tableware and church architecture – while other, less socially important elements such as domestic architecture were more widely adapted to fit local conditions. The Greenlanders had the most to lose and needed to prove to outsiders, and perhaps themselves, that they were part of the same civilised world as their visitors through monumental architecture and personal expressions such as clothing. In contrast, the Faroese had one large, unfinished stone church for the entire group of islands, while both they and the Icelanders continued to use smaller churches on the whole. The Faroe Islands and Iceland did not appear to be as concerned with proving their social credentials through large-scale ecclesiastical architecture, perhaps due to the fact that they were closer to mainland Europe and received more regular communication and trade.

It is notable that the church buildings in Greenland were represented by architecture more closely associated with contemporary churches thousands of miles away than with local domestic buildings. The ecclesiastical structures made it very clear that these people were good Christians. Travellers setting foot on these shores could be certain that they were not crossing what Robb (2001, 191) calls an 'ideological frontier'. Likewise, the manipulation of material culture, consciously or subconsciously, in order to provide the perception of certain identities, seems to have been based in part on the distance of the country from the population centres of Europe. This is logical considering that a greater distance from the mainland meant a greater risk of economic and social isolation. The people of the North Atlantic must have been aware of the prejudices against them and the doubt over their piety and cultural affiliation. They used material culture and social practices to create a conspicuous façade of familiarity to convince outsiders that they were them.

Social groups are often held together in part by a *belief* in common culture (Brather 2002, 171). Inhabitants of the North Atlantic certainly believed that they shared membership in the Christian society of Europe, and they did their best to give no one any reason to doubt their cultural credentials. Living in the North Atlantic provided unique challenges to trade and interaction in medieval Europe. The people living there could not simply walk to a market town whenever they wished or easily find transportation to a new location if they faced lean years. Even when the seas were passable, something needed to entice merchants to travel to them or to compel the king to send his supply ships. They could not simply rely on emphasising the exoticness of their products or exploits, for fear of incurring the 'Other' brand they were desperate to avoid. The advantage for the North Atlantic inhabitants in appearing as 'European' as possible in their dress, church architecture and daily practices was the continued contact with the rest of Europe and the inclusion within a larger social milieu while avoiding the alienation of their contacts (Pierce 2011, 280–81).

Without the connections of the church and the willingness of outsiders to interact with them, Greenland, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands would have been much more isolated and vulnerable. Although they might have managed basic survival without most of the imports and contact with visiting merchants, as a society the outside contacts kept them engaged with the wider world, even if it was a world that most of the inhabitants would never see. One of the ways in which these communities could take an active role in their own destiny was to use cultural elements such as ecclesiastical architecture and clothing to prove to outsiders that they were all part of the same wider European/Christian community. Much of this was probably done subconsciously. It is human nature to wish for one's existence to be noted and remembered, and to be accepted by a larger group. If the people of the North Atlantic were instead considered the Other, they would have been cut off from the known world.

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Chapter 8

We Are Not You: Being Different in Bronze Age Sicily

Anthony Russell

(University of Glasgow, Anthony.Russell@glasgow.ac.uk)

Abstract

When attempting to isolate group identities (e.g. ethnic groups, nationalities, citizenry, tribe) often shared materials and practices are highlighted as the defining features of the collective. Archaeologically, however, this can be problematic. Ethnographers have observed that only a circumscribed set of materials or practices will have self-ascription significance for any given group. For prehistoric communities we have neither surviving group members nor extant written evidence to inform us about which materials or practices had such collective self-ascription significance.

Group identity, however, can be expressed not only by materials, practices, and beliefs that are shared, but also in negative terms – by traits or associations that are either consciously avoided, or significantly adapted to seem traditional. Current globalisation studies have moved away from unidirectional assimilation analyses, to examine how outside influences are locally articulated by consuming communities. In Mediterranean prehistory, particularly during periods of conspicuous connectivity between different groups, a similar intentional rejection or adaptation may be read into local responses to cultural encounters. By looking at one instance – that of the Sicilian connection to the eastern Mediterranean during the Middle and Late Bronze Age – it will be argued that the rejection or severe re-contextualisation of certain outside materials and influences represents such an attempt to express and maintain a distinct collective identity in the face of increasing connectivity.

Keywords: *group identity; difference; Bronze Age; Sicily; adaptation; globalisation*

Cultures in contact: being the same and being different

I have to spend so much time explaining to Americans that I am not English and to Englishmen that I am not American that I have little time left to be Canadian.

Laurence J. Peter,
Canadian Educator

What makes us all the same is that we're all different.

AT&T ad,
Quoted in Wilk 1995, 110

In traditional approaches to the relationship between archaeological remains and group identity, shared material traits have been emphasised as the 'markers' of the group. This is despite the fact that it has long been acknowledged (and demonstrated through ethnographic studies) that only a select set of materials will be recognised as having communal identity connotations for such groups (Knapp 2008, 63). Given that it is self-ascription and self-recognition that forms the basis of the reality of the group (Emberling 1997, 302), be it an ethnicity, community, tribe or regional collective, any material expression of group identity must be acknowledged by the members as such. Any archaeological similarities shared between past communities, therefore, may or may not indicate the recognition of a shared identity; such similitude may simply have been a common response to ecological or environmental expediency, or an indication of a similar economic base. In a prehistoric context, where there is no complementary evidence for self-ascription, we cannot associate shared materials to a shared identity in any straightforward manner.

As an alternative, looking not at that which is shared but that which is different may more accurately define meaningful boundaries that exist between communal groups, particularly during times of increased contact and exchange. Material differences have the potential to highlight which traditional features have been maintained, and which external features have been rejected or adapted toward the promotion or maintenance of group identity. The challenge for the archaeologist, however, is the same: just as only a select set of shared materials will have identity implications for collectives, only certain differences between groups will have been meaningful. Barth (1969, 10) recognised long ago that it was not necessarily cultural isolation that produced difference between ethnic groups, but active responses to contact with those outside the collective. In fact, contact has often led to the active development of an awareness of the local, where previously there was little reason to be different (Jones 2007, 51). In effect, the collective defines itself by what it is not, rather than what it is. Such 'negative' definitions are common in the modern world: Canadians defining themselves as 'not American', Scots as 'not English', or New Zealanders as 'not Australian'. These three examples from the contemporary world clearly demonstrate that such a strategy does not need to be built upon conflict or (violent) animosity, but rather connectivity, negotiation and competition:

Canadians and Americans are allies and major trading partners; the rivalry between New Zealand and Australia is consistently friendly; and England and Scotland have been politically – and for the most part, peacefully – unified since 1707.

The idea that increased culture contact will inevitably produce homogenised material expressions across cultural boundaries, the hallmark of acculturation paradigms, is not one that stands up to ethnographic or archaeological scrutiny (e.g. Robb 2001, 187; Jones 2007, 56). Instead, the social stresses produced by contact, such as the fear of being culturally absorbed by more politically or economically powerful neighbours, more often leads to the active promotion of difference; a cultural, if not political, economic or geographic ‘insularity’ employed as an intentional strategy to produce a distinct identity, and to ensure the success of social reproduction (Appadurai 1990, 295; Knapp 2008, 19). These ideas about culture contact and its impact on collective identity will be applied to Bronze Age Sicily as a case study, where an increase in contact with the eastern Mediterranean, particularly with the Aegean, is archaeologically detectable from the Middle Bronze Age (hereafter MBA) on the island (c. 1450 BC).

Responses to culture contact: rejection, assimilation, and adaptation

When disparate cultures meet there are a wide range of responses available to such contact, conditioned by the similarity or dissimilarity of the groups involved, the form that such contact takes (e.g. commodity exchanges, marriage or other alliance, colonialism, warfare), and other logistical features such as ease and direction of contact, distances involved, and modes of transportation available. Under investigation here are scenarios involving primarily material exchanges (commonly referred to as trade), although other types of contact (political alliances, mobile artisans) should also be considered as possibilities for the end of the Bronze Age in the Mediterranean. Broadly speaking, the material responses to such contact fall under one of three categories: outright rejection; widespread acceptance, assimilation and imitation; and between these two extremes, various levels of appropriation of outside influences, and their adaptation and re-contextualisation into a new social setting. Complete rejection and isolation are not common responses to culture contact, and they are more likely to feature in historical scenarios involving violence or the threat of violence. They can also occur when the groups involved are so different that one or more of the parties involved regard any external influences as corrupt, dangerous, or simply irrelevant to their social needs. This rejection has been referred to as ‘jihad’ by one modern political scientist (Barber 1996): the denunciation of western globalisation by non-western (often Islamic) societies, who are alarmed by the perceived social permissiveness and moral decay that the west, particularly America, represents to them. Nevertheless, this is an extreme reaction for even the most insulated of Islamic societies, and one would be hard pressed to find any who were completely untouched by some aspect of the ‘modern’ west. Outright rejection is not a feature of culture contact situations in MBA or Late Bronze Age (LBA) Sicily.

Open assimilation and imitation, often treated in archaeology under the rubric of ‘acculturation’ (Cusick 1998, 128) is perhaps a more common response to culture contact, and usually anticipates a trend of homogenisation of material culture between the societies in contact. Just as complete rejection of external stimuli is rarely detected in the material record, the straightforward, uncritical adoption of foreign objects, ideas or practices also seldom seems to be the case. Possible candidates for such imitation might be found in empire-building contexts (e.g. the adoption of Roman symbols and practices in imperial provinces), or in situations of colonial expansion, such as the influences detected on central and western Mediterranean societies in response to the co-presence of Phoenician and Greek colonists. Even in such imperial or colonial scenarios, however, such assimilation or emulation was rarely so thorough as to completely displace or erase traditional materials and practices. More often a strategic negotiation of competing ideologies took place (Jiménez 2010, 56). Acculturation may be a reasonable way to describe a process of material homogenisation that results from contact, but in order to extend it to the level of collective identities, where formerly distinct groups no longer see themselves as different, we would need to engage in issues of motivation and advantage for the societies thus affected. This is difficult to do in a prehistoric context, and often – as will be seen in the Sicilian case study here – such motivation is commonly glossed over, and the advantages for acculturating are held to be self-evident: assumed, but not argued.

The middle-ground scenario of qualified acceptance of external materials and practices, and their translation into local vernaculars, would appear to be the most common reaction to culture contact, and the most logical response to peaceful exchange contexts. What results is often the hybridisation of materials and practices: the active appropriation of certain elements of foreign contact, the intentional rejection of others, and – importantly – the re-contextualisation of such outside stimuli to conform to local community needs (Howes 1996, 2). The re-contextualisation is in fact a way to make foreign influences seem traditional. In such a way the benefits of contact are maintained, while at the same time the distinct identity of the collective is more actively recognised, defined and promoted.

I believe such a process of intentional differentiation can be read into the responses to contact at certain Sicilian centres in the MBA and LBA. The appropriate analogy is not with acculturation and homogenisation, and certainly not with total rejection and isolation, but with globalisation and its engagement with cross-cultural consumption and heterogeneous articulations. This is appropriate for exchange scenarios because they rarely represent the types of social stresses required for the deep change represented by a shift in group ascription. It is easier, and probably more desirable, to change the meanings or uses of outside material stimuli, rather than to significantly alter ourselves at the communal identity level. Objects can be acculturated much more expediently than people.

Being different: a social strategy for developing 'local' consciousness

With regards to archaeological data, the term 'difference' does not exclusively refer to any incidental material differences noted between contextually distinct assemblages. Using such a definition to explore group identity would be no more than the flip side of focusing on material similarities within these groups: concentrating on similar materials to define the group is, by implication, suggesting that such shared materials are different from those outside of the boundary of the collective. As mentioned above, these differences may lack identity implications for any group so identified. There is a clear risk of circular argument here: group X is identified by their material differences from other groups; these material differences exist because group X is distinct; we know group X is distinct because they have material differences.

This is not the definition of difference employed in this study. Under examination here is the conscious development of difference: an awareness that there are material options available, and the intentional decision to create or promote material expressions that are distinct, either from the raw or intentionally adapted, to appear different from one's neighbours as an expression of unique group identity. This is difference 'as the product of active social choices' (Robb 2001, 181), a conscious strategy to deal with social stresses. Such demarcation is a common feature during periods of increased contact among groups. While a certain blurring of the boundaries between groups in such situations can occur as materials and influences are transmitted and received amongst parties, interaction can also stimulate the desire to stand distinct from those with whom you are in contact. Promoting difference becomes an intentional social strategy for protecting the integrity of the group (Knapp 2008, 19). Features that were accorded little social importance now take on new significance, and perhaps additional meaning, precisely because they are different. Often active rejections of external stimuli occur to preserve distinction, or new features (e.g. objects, ways of creating, influences) are heavily adapted in order to stand distinct from the external source; in a way 'naturalised' to conform with traditional materials and practices.

For example, an anthropologist working in Belize for a number of decades observed first-hand the development of a Belizean consciousness as a direct result of increased local exposure to foreign commodities and cultural influences (Wilk 1995). Certain traditional customs that had been given little attention and accorded low social status became more relevant and important because they were distinct from the cultural practices of the new 'other.' This was not a primordial feature of Belizean self-awareness, however, but developed over the years as its citizens 'learned' to be local (Wilk 1995, 110–11). Belize, like many former colonial holdings in Central and South America, did not have a homogeneous, ethnically distinct population, but was, and is, a rather heterogeneous collective of many colonial, foreign labourer and indigenous groups unified by the particularities of their political history. When the anthropologist first visited Belize in the 1970s and inquired about Belizean

cuisine, he was informed that such a thing did not exist – the closest approximation being a type of ‘Creole’ cooking not highly regarded by the middle or upper classes (Wilk 1995, 112). Over time, however, as separatist anti-colonial movements gained popularity, increased contact with the global community came to be perceived as a threat to sovereignty and the developing local identity. Creole cooking became a mark of authentic Belizean culture, and other aspects of ‘indigenous’ life (e.g. types of dress, distinct styles of woodcraft) were embraced by a wider spectrum of Belizean society as important distinguishing marks of their unique national identity. There was no move toward cultural isolation, however; such a break with the outside world would have been economically impractical, if not outright catastrophic, for such a small sovereign enclave. Instead, along with the newly acquired status of formerly neglected traditional culture, certain imported materials, practices and influences were re-contextualised to conform to Belizean sensibilities, to become palatable and appear consistent with the promotion of local identity.

These appropriations were not only restricted to the anti-colonial sovereign movement, but also included the upper-class, pro-British strata. For example, the adoption of beauty pageants in Belize produced two distinct types of ceremony: one where contestants were encouraged to be more in tune with ‘folk’ culture, American modernism, and standards of beauty that reflected those of the indigenous classes (leftist separatist movement); and one where there was an active promotion of ‘higher’ western culture, and the appreciation of ‘refined’ beauty, and British/European respectability (rightist colonial party) (Wilk 1995, 124). While the criteria employed were different, the aim of both parties was the same: to define what it means to be Belizean against the backdrop of a globalised world.

In Trinidad, another process of becoming different was observed, one that saw multi-ethnic islander identities, particularly Trinidadians of Indian and African descent, become unified. Rather than a schism between competing parties such as had been noted in Belize, in the Caribbean the recognition of an extra-insular ‘other’ (i.e. pervasive western products and media) effected a cohesion between ethnically diverse communities on the island under the rubric of being Trinidadian. Miller (2001, 399) noted how on the one hand the African population defined themselves as a group against the Indian populace; while on the other, they incorporated Indian Trinidadians as part and parcel of their own identity against the global backdrop. By looking through the prism of the consumption of soda in Trinidad, he demonstrates how internal differences can be reduced in significance in response to a more pervasive outside influence.

In Trinidad soda consumption can be classified into two types: black and red sweet drinks. The black sweet drink, usually rum and Coke, is traditionally associated with the Trinidadian population of African descent. This consumption is regarded commonly by the Indian community as an attempt by African Trinidadians to emulate ‘white’ behaviour, even though such black drinks represent the primary alcoholic consumption island-wide (Miller 2001, 398). Meanwhile red sweet drinks,

non-alcoholic fruit-flavoured beverages like 'Kola Champagne,' are more commonly associated with Indian Trinidadians, and have been considered the nostalgic 'ethnic' drinks because Indian people represent an ethnic minority on the island (Miller 2001, 397). Again, this is more of a traditional, 'mythic' association, and going for 'a red and a roti' (Miller 2001, 399) is very much a part of the African Trinidadian experience, in much the same way that UK residents today would consider having a curry an innate part of the British experience. Perhaps in response to the perception of drinking Coke as a white or American thing to do, the island's African consumers have come to consider eating Indian food and drinking red drinks as important symbols of a distinctly Trinidadian way of life. In a similar manner, while Anglophone Canadians may regard Francophone Canadians as a socio-political 'other' in some contexts, the French component of Canadian culture and history is often embraced by English-speakers as an important difference between being Canadian and being American. *You are different from us, but we are different from them.*

In both of these ethnographic examples it is important to note that there is typically no superficial subtext of domination and resistance imposed upon the behaviour of Belizean and Trinidadian communities. Instead there is the recognition of 'stable regime[s] of competition' (Wilk 1995, 115), which generate the dialogues of distinct group identity. These competitions exist both externally (e.g. Belize and Trinidad and Tobago vs. the modern, globalised world), and internally (e.g. separatists vs. colonialists, African vs. Indian communities). Even when powerful external forces are at play, these negotiated responses do not so much reflect an aggressive resistance to coercive force as they do a subtle engagement and re-interpretation by the consuming parties.

Sicily in the Middle and Late Bronze Age: a material overview of extra-insular connections

While foreign materials are certainly known from Sicilian contexts before the beginning of the MBA, c. 1450 BC, it is from that point that a notable increase in the number and type of objects and influences is detectable (Fig. 8.1). During the MBA and LBA the island displays evidence for direct or indirect contact with the Italian mainland (Albanese Procelli 1996, 122), the Aeolian Islands (Tusa 1999, 603–604), Malta (Tanasi 2008), the Iberian Peninsula (Giardino 1995, 327–28), Sardinia (Levi 2004, 237), the Aegean (Tusa 2000; Vianello 2005), and Cyprus (Castellana 2002, 133–35). The most widely published and promoted connection is with the Aegean. So-called Mycenaean materials comprise the data which will be used here to argue that Sicilian society was attempting to stand distinct from the extra-insular cultures with which they came in contact, and a summary of the evidence for this connection follows.

The primary material evidence for contact between Sicily and the Aegean is Mycenaean pottery, more precisely termed Late Helladic pottery. From the fifteenth century BC this distinctive style of painted pottery is found at a range of Sicilian sites, in particular those along Sicily's east coast, although the south coast and some interior

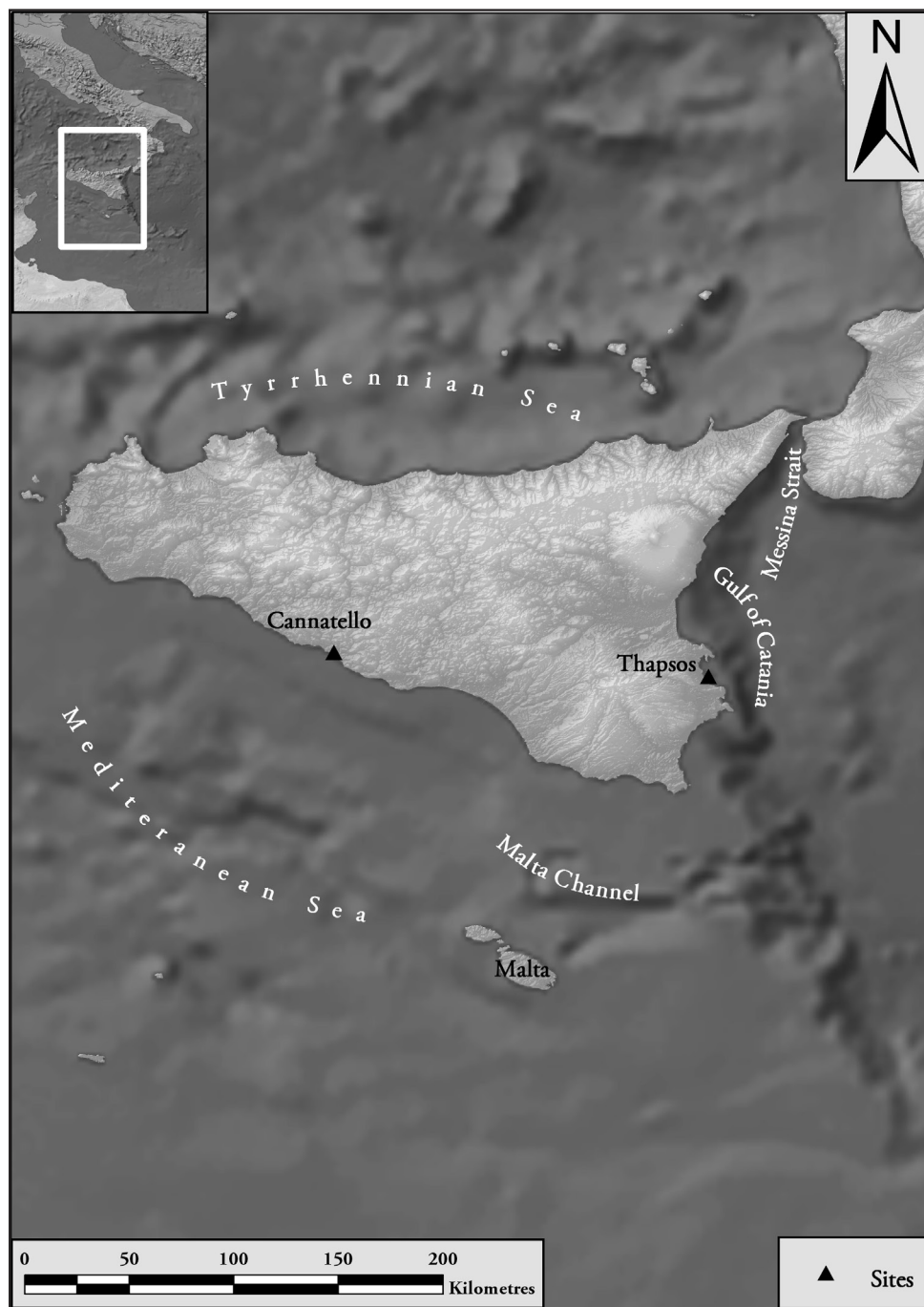


Fig. 8.1: Map of Sicily showing the location of sites mentioned. Inset: Sicily in its central Mediterranean context (map by Ryan K. McNutt).



Fig. 8.2: Typical Late Helladic imported pottery found in Sicily. Right: three-handled piriform jar; left: alabastron (not to scale) (adapted from Marazzi and Tusa 2001).

sites have also yielded Late Helladic sherds. These pots are most commonly found in rock-cut tombs, a key exception being the site of Cannatello in Agrigento, located about 1.5 kilometres inland from the south coast. In all, there have been 17 sites where Mycenaean pottery has been found, although with the exception of two locations, the aforementioned Cannatello and the harbour of Thapsos on the east coast, no site is represented by more than a few sherds. The most common shapes are three-handled piriform jars and alabastra (Fig. 8.2). While other parts of the central Mediterranean have shown evidence for locally made Aegean-looking pottery (e.g. the southern Italian peninsula; Nuraghe Antigori on Sardinia), for the most part this does not seem to be the case in Sicily (D'Agata 2000, 64), where nearly all of the analysed Late Helladic pots are Aegean imports.

Also thought to be of Aegean origin are certain metal objects. These are primarily represented by a range of bronze tools and weapons, such as bowls, knives and daggers (Castellana 2002, 134; Militello 2004, 309), but also include four gold rings (Tanasi 2004, 344). Metal objects are much rarer finds than pottery, and consequently it is more difficult to pinpoint a specific point of origin, although in some cases there is a noticeable distribution bias in favour of the Aegean. Like Late Helladic pottery, most bronzes, and all gold rings, have been recovered from tomb contexts. Finally, there are sundry finds of amber or bone beads that have also been argued to have come from the Aegean to Sicily (Militello 2004, 310). Amber is not native to the Aegean, and most foreign amber recovered from pre-Roman Italy is thought to be of Baltic origin (Negroni Catacchio 1989). The most that could be said, therefore, is that Aegean agents could have been the conduits of transportation for Baltic amber to Sicily. As an Adriatic Sea route has also been proposed for amber (Harding 1984, 74), however, it is not necessary to assume such objects reflect an Aegean connection.

Aside from actual imported, finished goods, Aegean influence upon Sicilian production has also been interpreted in certain material expressions. The type of

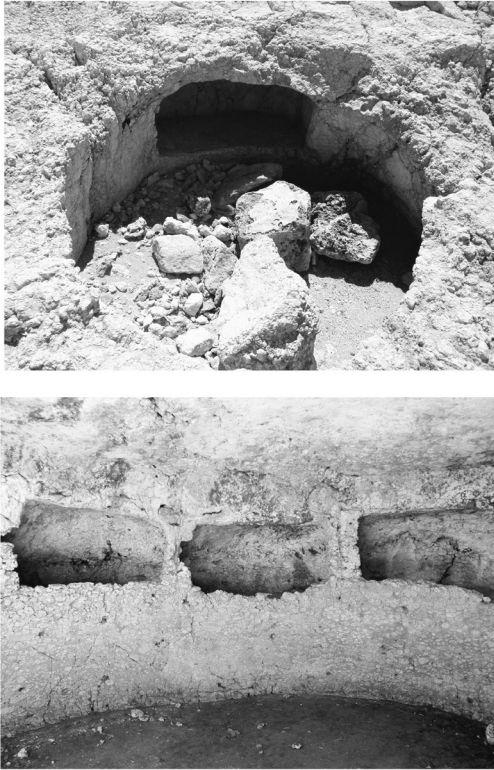


Fig. 8.3: Rock-cut tombs from Thapsos. Top: looking through a collapsed roof to the central chamber; bottom: wall niches inside an intact tomb (author's image).

pottery prevalent in MBA Sicily, called the Thapsos-Milazzese style, has been argued to display influences from Late Helladic ware. Ceramic specialists have coined the term 'Aegean derivative ware' (D'Agata 2000, 64) to refer to this subset of Sicilian-made pots that display either an overall shape resemblance, a specific formal feature or a figural motif derived from Late Helladic pottery. In the MBA these new shapes, elements or motifs are reproduced using traditional Sicilian handmade techniques. By the LBA, however, Sicilian pottery of the Pantalica North style was created in a more similar way to Aegean pottery, using a potter's wheel (Tanasi 2004, 340). As a result, the Pantalica North pots thought to be influenced by Late Helladic ware bear a much closer shape resemblance to their Aegean prototypes.

The introduction or development of certain architectural forms in Sicily is also thought to demonstrate close contact and influence with the Aegean. These forms include funerary architecture, with Sicilian rock-cut chamber tombs (Fig. 8.3) being compared to Mycenaean chamber

tombs, which are often mislabelled as *tholos* tombs (Tomassello 2004, 189). That term, however, should more properly be reserved for the more monumental, ashlar-built type of 'beehive' tombs in the Aegean. The argument for Aegean influence is rather problematic in general for funerary architecture in Sicily, as rock-cut tombs have a long pedigree on the island, have existed in the central Mediterranean longer than in the Aegean (Whitehouse 1972, 276), and never became the dominant form of burial in Greece. In fact, there are more examples of this kind of tomb in Sicily than in Greece, so any influence represented may in fact be travelling west to east.

More compelling evidence for architectural influence can be seen in non-funerary architecture, such as the dramatic departure represented by the central habitation zone complexes at the harbour site of Thapsos (Fig. 8.4). These rectilinear, multi-room edifices stand in stark contrast to the earlier buildings at Thapsos, and are not similar to any other known Bronze Age settlement on the island. Accordingly, it has

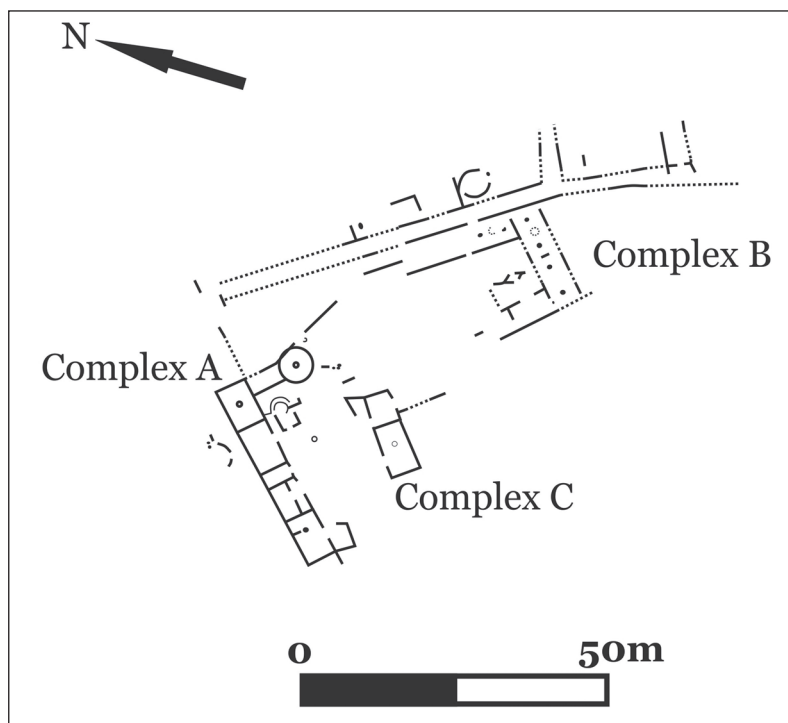


Fig. 8.4: Plan of the three central complexes at Thapsos (author's image).

been suggested that the Thapsos complexes have clear architectural parallels – and perhaps even incorporate a unit of measurement – from the Mycenaean or Cypriot sphere (Tomasello 1996, 1601). Such findings have led to a debate over whether foreign labour was used to construct these forms, or just an Aegean architect overseeing local Sicilian workers (Tomasello 2004, 215; Militello 2004, 336). Little attention has been paid to the creative potential of MBA Sicilians themselves to develop new styles of architecture independently.

Overall, those espousing the importance of Aegean contact to the material and social development of Sicilian society at the end of the Bronze Age tend to focus on the novel aspects: what is new in the MBA material record, be it actual imports or influences. In the following section, however, this perspective is reversed, and instead the focus will be on how Sicilian communities actually consumed exotic objects and articulated material influences. It becomes evident that what was maintained from traditional material practices – and what was actively rejected from outside – was just as important to the development of a distinct Sicilian identity in the latter half of the second millennium BC as any influences accepted from the Aegean sphere.

Sicily in the Middle and Late Bronze Age: from contact to consciousness

We know that in the Bronze Age, Sicilian consumers encountered foreign objects from elsewhere in the Mediterranean. These objects must have come by sea, because Sicily is an island. Beyond these certainties, the identities of the actual agents of exchange are a matter of probabilities at best. We do not know whether Sicilians encountered Aegean merchants or sailors directly, or whether goods travelled through other hands before finally being deposited in Sicilian contexts. It seems likely that both scenarios played out: at times Sicilian traders dealt directly with Aegean merchants, both on the shores of their island and elsewhere in the central Mediterranean; at other times Sicilians readily acquired Aegean and other extra-insular materials second- or third-hand, by engaging directly with merchants and sailors from southern Italy, the Aeolian Islands, Sardinia, or elsewhere.

Those are the possible scenarios for the acquisition of foreign, finished products. For those scholars interpreting deep, penetrative influences of Aegean objects and methods of production upon Sicilian-made goods (Tanasi 2009, 52), an assumption of the direct interaction between local islander communities and Mycenaean artisans, labourers or architects is maintained. From a consumption-based perspective, however, the question needs to be asked: was engagement with finished products not enough to inspire and influence Sicilian potters, smiths and builders? Many current studies of culture contact deal with the issue of materiality: not only an investigation of how we interact physically and emotionally with different materials, but also of the active influence objects themselves possess, independent of their manufacturers or distributors (Miller 2005, 11–13). The experience of consuming an imported item could itself be an inspirational agent for incorporating new features into Sicilian material culture. Simultaneously, the persistent existence of traditional Sicilian materials, and the continuity or stability they represented, could have acted as a constraining factor for local artisans. Unlike other places in the central Mediterranean, Sicily did not develop local imitations of Late Helladic pottery, so the need for the direct presence of Mycenaean potters must be questioned. Similarly, while the foundations of certain buildings may have a general semblance to Aegean and other eastern Mediterranean structures, it should be remembered that we are only comparing foundations, and not the more conspicuous aspects of standing buildings. By looking at ‘derivative’ objects from the perspective of active appropriations, instead of the passive reception of influence and/or tuition there appear to be clues that indicate it was important to maintain a sense of local identity in the face of increasing external stimuli.

For example, the so-called Aegean derivative wear detected in Sicilian assemblages has justifiably been remarked upon for its evident incorporation of Late Helladic features. Just as important as what has been received and incorporated, though, is what has been maintained from traditional potting practices, and rejected from the outside. The most conspicuous feature of Late Helladic ware, and arguably one of the reasons it was a popularly traded and imitated style of pottery throughout the Bronze Age Mediterranean, was its painted finish. This finish, however, is

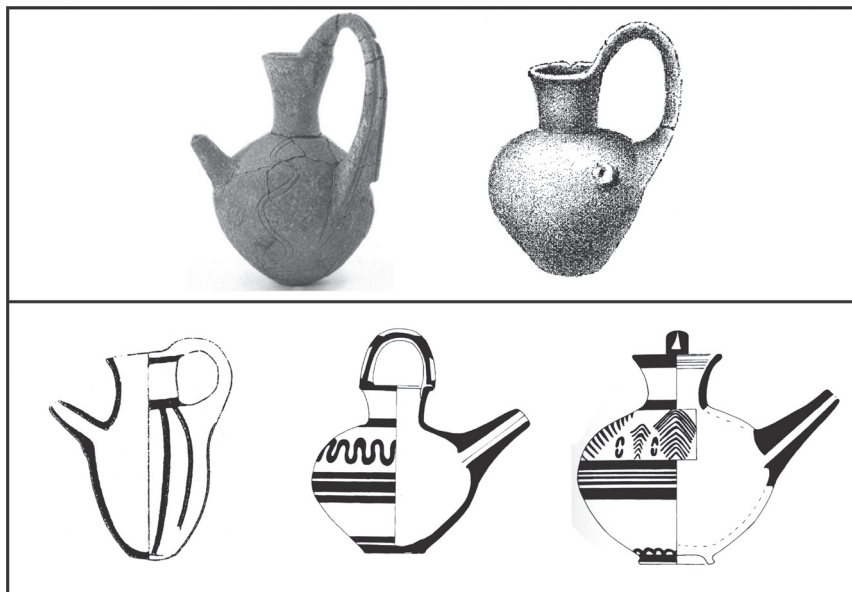


Fig. 8.5: Aegean derivative ware. Top: local shapes thought to be inspired by Aegean prototypes; bottom: possible influencing shapes from Cyprus (left) and the Aegean (centre, right) (adapted from Marazzi and Tusa 2001; D'Agata 2000; Mountjoy 1999).

never reproduced in the Sicilian Aegean derivative ware, and instead these pots are decorated with a traditional dark brown, burnished finish (D'Agata 2000, 65). The end result is a pot that, despite a few subtle new traits or new overall shape, still looks Sicilian (Fig. 8.5). The pots fit comfortably within the Thapsos-Milazzese facies, and the manufacturers' aim, not to mention the consumers' demand, may have been that any new shape or formal element look 'natural' and traditional. The argument could be made that, much in the same way wheel-made pottery was not yet produced in Sicily, the technology involved in decorating these pots with an Aegean-looking painted finish had also not transferred. When looking at later LBA Pantalica North derivative pots, however, which do appear to have been made using a potter's wheel, the conspicuous rejection of a painted finish persists. Only much later in the Final Bronze Age (*Bronzo finale*) does painting become popular in Sicilian pottery, with the introduction of Cassibile-style plumed ware. During that period (late eleventh–ninth centuries BC), however, the influence is clearly being felt from the Italian mainland and the Aeolian Islands (Tusa 1999, 603–604), not the Aegean.

Most of the examples of Aegean derivative pots have been recovered from burials, potentially a conservative context, where doing things in a traditional – or at least traditional-looking – manner may have had value to certain Sicilian consumers. There appears to have been no stricture placed upon Sicilian community members to have Sicilian-looking grave goods, and many tombs do indeed include foreign objects from

the Aegean and elsewhere. Perhaps, then, for specific rituals or for specific individuals it was important to have Sicilian-made and Sicilian-looking objects to use; but for other aspects of the funerary ritual, or for other individuals, a foreign object had its place. It is possible that some of the new formal features that made their way into the Sicilian ceramic repertoire improved certain aspects of the funeral ritual, but lacked any far-reaching identity implications. For example, the incorporation of a narrow spout on jugs may have facilitated part of the ritual involving pouring, by allowing for a tighter, more controlled flow of liquid than what traditional open-mouthed jugs could provide (Russell 2011, 249–50). It would thus represent a pragmatic or aesthetic choice for the consumer, not an attempt to imitate foreign practice.

There are no tombs in Sicily that have exclusively foreign grave goods, and a mix of foreign and local objects is commonly encountered. Most of these objects come from multiple burial tombs, excavated in the late nineteenth century AD with scanty recording of context and disposition, and as a result it is rarely possible to associate any specific set of goods in a tomb with any particular burial. Common practice was for older burial paraphernalia to be moved to the sides of the rock-cut chambers, and only have the most recent burial(s) in the middle (Leighton 1999, 130). Nevertheless, every MBA and LBA burial with grave goods contains local Sicilian materials, usually in a decided majority (Blake 2008, 10–11). It would appear, then, that any foreign objects were used to augment the Sicilian burial ritual, not replace it, perhaps giving the deceased a higher status due to his or her access to rare, extra-insular objects. It seems unlikely, however, that these individuals were attempting to behave in an overtly ‘Mycenaean’ manner, and the rejection of a painted finish on derivative pottery indicates that the promotion of a distinct Sicilian identity had value to islander communities.

One other feature of Aegean derivative pottery deserves mention, as it may represent a failed appropriation of external influences. This is the sudden appearance in the MBA of figural representations on pottery, such as animals. These representations are also argued to have been an Aegean-inspired feature (D’Agata 2000, 70–71) although they are not a common find in Sicily, where only six examples are known, all from Thapsos (Leighton 1999, 153, fig. 76). Further complicating a straightforward Aegean inspiration is the fact that no examples of figural decoration on Late Helladic pottery have been found in Sicily, and very few within the central Mediterranean as a whole, where abstract patterns are much more common (Blake 2008, 9). Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that this is a new, albeit rare, feature of Sicilian pottery in the MBA. If Late Helladic or Cypro-Levantine pottery (Alberti 2004, 133–34; Leighton 1999, 174) was its inspiration, perhaps the prototypes have simply not survived or been found yet. Even assuming this is an eastern Mediterranean influence, though, it is immediately evident that figural decoration has also been translated into a Sicilian ceramic vernacular. While figural motifs on Aegean pottery are painted, the Sicilian versions are created using the method of incision, a technique known in Sicily and the Aeolian Islands from

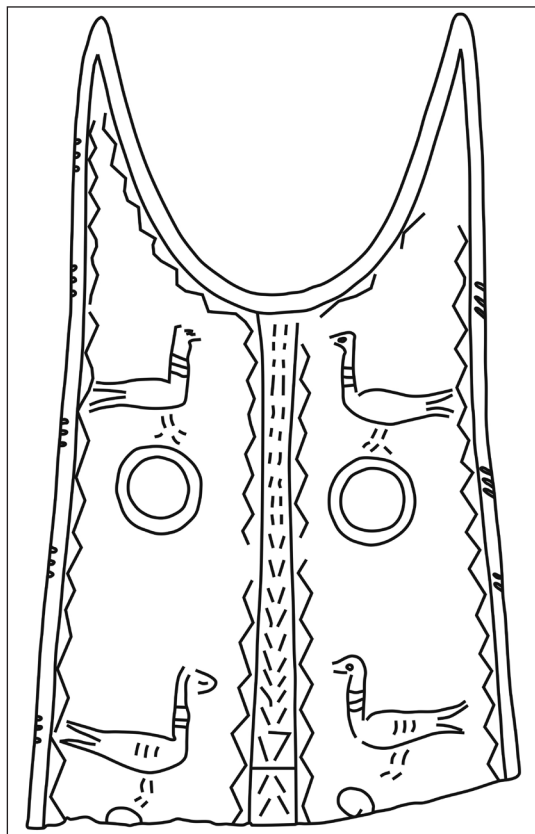


Fig. 8.6: Back plate of a pedestal basin found in Complex B, Thapsos (author's image).

the Early Bronze Age (Leighton 1999, 134; Tusa 1999, 345–46). While only a handful of these pots have been found, the technique has been used on one of the most culturally significant forms – the tall pedestal basin. One interesting example was recovered from Complex B in the central habitation area in Thapsos (Fig. 8.6) (Voza 1973, 141–42). While the precise functions of this building are uncertain, one suggestion is that it represents a space for the formal interaction of locals and visitors (Doonan 2001, 179–80 – see below). If this is true, then such a derivative piece, which integrates a foreign style via the language of Sicilian pottery, could have expressed a powerful message about the identity of its users: *we are open to new ideas, but we still do things our own way.*

Since this feature of incised figural decoration is limited in both the number of existing

examples and in distribution to a single site, it may be that such a practice represents a failed negotiation in Sicilian identity politics. Certain individuals from Thapsos commissioned or manufactured these pots, but for whatever reason the technique failed to become popular over time, or outside of Thapsos, in the way other forms in the Thapsos-Milazzese style did. An important caveat, therefore, is that not all appropriations will be successful, even when naturalised to be more palatable to conservative consumers.

When looking at the new settlement architecture in the MBA, specifically the central habitation zone complexes at Thapsos, it is difficult to argue against some kind of external influence at work. These rectilinear, courtyard-focussed buildings are remarkably different from the typical circular ‘hut’ style settlements known from other Sicilian sites (Militello 2004, 315). There are still not many Middle or Late Bronze Age settlements known on Sicily, however, and none represent a harbour context like Thapsos (Leighton 1999, 150). It is necessary to exercise caution in evaluating the importance



Fig. 8.7: Satellite image of Thapsos in its peninsular setting, looking west (author's image).

of this site when we do not know if it was atypical of Sicilian settlements in general, or harbour communities specifically. The tendency to classify Thapsos as the MBA type site, therefore, should be challenged (van Wijngaarden 2002, 206). Nevertheless, in Thapsos we have a site that not only underwent a radical re-development, but was also a place where locals and foreigners could have directly interacted on “the beach” (Fig. 8.7) (Dietler 1998, 297). When looking at the central complexes from a local perspective, however, two aspects need to be highlighted: there is little more than the foundations of these buildings with which to assess their novelty; and even with such sparse remains there is still significant local, traditional input that can be discerned.

The ground plans of the complexes, with central courtyards and axially arranged rectangular rooms surrounding them, certainly evoke – at least in a general way – the organisational principles seen in eastern Mediterranean sites. Perhaps because the similarities are so general, and do not reflect the direct imitation of any particular Aegean or eastern Mediterranean buildings, there has been no consensus regarding which foreign structures the Thapsos complexes should be compared. Architecture at Gla in Boeotia (Tusa 1999, 498), Mycenae (Voza 1973, 138), Pyla Kokkinokremmos and Maa Palaeokastro in Cyprus (Tomasello 2004, 203), and Megiddo in the Levant (Militello 2004, 320) have all been proposed as possible prototypes. This is strictly an exercise in comparing the foundations of these buildings, and thus the basic organisation of their ground floors. It is possible that in elevation the Thapsos buildings may have looked quite different to these comparanda. We know little about the treatment of walls, the type of roofing, or the kinds of decoration or furnishings at the site, all of which would have been more conspicuous features to residents and visitors to Thapsos than the foundations themselves. It is possible that those more perceivable features would have looked more or less traditional to Sicilian consumers, in the same way

the traditional brown, burnished finish of Aegean derivative pottery made their new shapes and new formal elements seem local.

There is some evidence that a Sicilian vernacular was being pursued, even in the scanty elevations that survive. Militello (2004, 318) notes that, despite new organisational principles seen in the complexes, these Thapsos buildings have much that is traditional in their construction, including double-faced masonry with a rubble fill, strategically placed wells, circular hearths, and benches composed of small slabs lining the interior of walls. He uses such evidence to argue that foreign labour was not required for the construction of these complexes, and that it was enough for an Aegean architect, trained in the Levant, to oversee the operation (Militello 2004, 336). Just as exposure to finished Late Helladic pottery was surely enough to inspire Sicilian potters in their new creations, I am not convinced that any foreign architects needed to be present to organise what was still a fairly straightforward construction. In its older phases, Thapsos was not a disorganised site (Leighton 1999, 153), and the division of its earlier northern habitation area (Fig. 8.8) into discrete compounds may well have led to the development of the more rectilinear central complexes without much outside influence. Even if certain organisational principals originated from outside of the island, the transmission of these ideas did not necessarily involve the movement of foreign architects or labour.

Regardless of any foreign influence in their planning or execution, whether it was manifested in a foreign presence at the site or just the adoption of eastern Mediterranean ideas about the organisation of space, it seems clear that a distinct Sicilian flavour was given to the Thapsos complexes. Very few foreign wares were found in the settlement, with more Maltese than Aegean pottery recovered (Tanasi 2008,

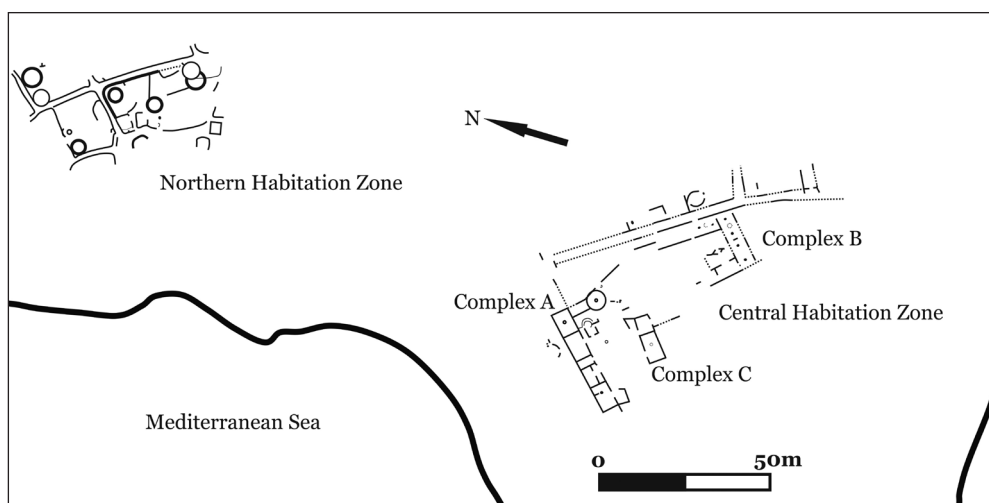


Fig. 8.8: Plan of the earlier northern habitation zone at Thapsos (top left) vs the later central habitation complexes (right) (author's image).

38–40). The vast majority of finds, however, were local Sicilian products, indicating a traditional lifestyle was being maintained despite the new type of organisation being employed. Furthermore, an earlier circular building was not destroyed to make way for Complex A, but had to be accommodated by the layout of the new structure (Voza 1973, 141). This would seem to indicate a continued value given to traditional buildings, as does the continued use and occupation of the northern habitation area after the construction of the central complexes (Alberti 2007, 368–69). The reception of external stimuli was negotiated through and encouraged the promotion of a distinctly Sicilian way of doing things, even in a space that may have been used for the interaction of locals and visitors (Doonan 2001, 179–80).

Conclusion: being different in Bronze Age Sicily

In the Middle Bronze Age, coinciding with an increase in contact with extra-insular peoples, materials and ideas and, as argued here, in response to this contact, Sicilian communities began to develop a distinct collective identity. The island began to see the spread of a shared material culture, such as the distribution of Thapsos-Milazzese pottery beyond the east coast, and a steady decrease in the heterogeneous regionalism that categorised Early Bronze Age assemblages. I would argue that this trend toward a shared material vernacular represents the expression of a Sicilian identity in opposition to the materials and influences that islanders were absorbing at the time. As Robb (2001, 190) noted in his observation that Malta in the Late Neolithic period became a more culturally homogenous archipelago, ‘the exotic as a category defines the local, normal or natural through opposition to it’. In other words, it was not isolation, insularity or ignorance that generated a distinct Maltese society; it was knowledge of and contact with the ‘other’ that encouraged a strategy of material and cultural distinction, and thus the development of a Maltese consciousness. I envision a similar process at work in MBA Sicily.

In modern globalisation, this development of local identity and consciousness has engendered the spread and promotion of shared, unifying materials and practices in response to the perceived cultural threat represented by pervasive western culture. In Trinidad, having ‘a red and a roti’ becomes not just a feature of being Indian Trinidadian, but being Trinidadian in general: promoted and embraced because it is different from the practices of others. In Sicily, the spread of rock-cut chamber tombs, the use of Thapsos-Milazzese pottery, and a common set of metal forms was an expression of shared ‘Sicilian-ness,’ even when some of these material expressions were themselves partially influenced by exotic objects, practices and technologies. In those influenced forms a naturalising process of making things appear local or traditional was a common response to the appropriation of external stimuli.

There is no simplistic narrative of domination and resistance being promoted in this model of Sicilian creative consumption and collective identity development. It seems unlikely that the occasional presence of foreign objects and extra-insular

peoples would have been perceived as a threat to Sicilian lifeways in the same way that some modern societies may feel a cultural crisis in the swamping of their markets and mass media with western commodities and ideologies. As one anthropologist put it, we need to avoid the 'It's All Right, They've Appropriated It' school of thought (Wilk 1995, 115) as such ideas intrinsically promote a domination-resistance narrative. Instead, in Sicily there existed a 'stable regime of competition' (Wilk 1995, 115), where contact led to the negotiation of how Sicilian identity should be constituted, and an increased consciousness of being distinct – and wanting to be distinct – in the world. Sicilian identity was not simply something these islander communities had, it was something they experienced, and re-contextualising external influences into traditional vernaculars was a logical response to make their experience of being Sicilian, of being different and distinct in a globalised Bronze Age world, feel genuine and stable. Not all outside influences could comfortably be translated into a Sicilian identity, and at times certain segments of islander communities may have been more open to outside ideas than others. It is tempting to see the very limited spread of figural decoration on pottery as just such an unsuccessful negotiation within Sicilian, and in particular Thapsos, society.

While Sicilian material culture unquestionably changed during the Middle and Late Bronze Age, such modification did not reflect an attempt by islander communities to passively imitate those with whom they were in contact. It was the promotion of a unique Sicilian identity, one that needed to be different, and perceived as so from inside and outside for it to exist at all (Friedman 1990, 321). These were not Mycenaeanised Sicilians acculturating to a homogeneous Aegean material identity, but a society in contact, becoming aware of their distinction, and attempting to promote a discrete corporate identity even while absorbing the cultural stimuli of the other.

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Chapter 9

There Is No Identity: Discerning the Indiscernible

Dene Wright

(University of Glasgow, Dene.Wright@glasgow.ac.uk)

Abstract

This paper is cast as a journey in abstract in the construction of a theoretical bricolage of symmetrical and interpretive approaches to offer an understanding of what the lithic assemblages of the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers of West Central Scotland can tell us about identity and group identities. A central tenet of Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* (2004) [1968] is the notion that there is no identity. However, psychology considers group identity to be the normative ties that bind people. Anthropology takes these normative ties further and asks us to consider the agency of the objectification of practice within a performance setting, which is recast in terms of symmetrical approaches. A continuity of technological practice, as 'a way of being,' exists across the greater part of the *longue durée* of the Mesolithic period in Scotland. The continuity of technological practice may be said to mask identity and blur distinctions between different groups of hunter-gatherers. However, the *chaîne opératoire* makes it possible to identify aspects of the identity of a person from the detailed analysis of the technological attributes of lithic artefacts. Group identities may be distinguished by the recognition of the variations in the choices made in the procurement of raw materials by different hunter-gatherer groups.

Keywords: Mesolithic, Deleuze, difference, becoming different, being Mesolithic, technology, symmetry, supervenience, group identities

Introduction

The character of the Mesolithic resource in West Central Scotland primarily consists of lithic scatters comprised of surface collections and excavated assemblages, which represent a conflation of different events creating palimpsests of two or more phases of activity. As shown by previous regional studies (e.g. Hardy and Wickham-Jones 2007;

Mithen 2000), the resource is set against a background of a continuity of technological practice throughout the greater part of the *longue durée* of the Mesolithic period in Scotland. What can the patterning in the lithic scatters of the Mesolithic period really tell us about identity and group identities?

When initially confronted by the lithic assemblages I felt as if I stood transfixed on a threshold before understanding. What follows is my journey in abstract to construct a theoretical *bricolage* of symmetrical and interpretive approaches (cf. Olsen 2010) to offer a meaningful understanding of aspects of Mesolithic lifeways in West Central Scotland from the dataset. The initial trigger to my first step over the threshold stemmed from the continuity of technological practice, although I recognised it has never been understood in the abstract. This highlighted to me a requirement to consider how I could explore and give meaning to difference as an abstraction, and as such I was drawn to the philosophies of Gilles Deleuze, with a principal focus on *Difference and Repetition* which was first published in 1968.

My journey in abstract combines the two principal themes of difference and technology that are folded into a cohesive framework by reference to Deleuze's (2004 [1968]) *Difference and Repetition*. Because I have been engaged mainly with the technological and attribute analysis of lithic assemblages these constructs have been recast to incorporate the *chaîne opératoire* (after Leroi-Gourhan 1993 [1964]). By conjoining these themes of variation and technology, I would argue that the structure has allowed me to understand that it is people and things as technology within the relational continuum that inscribe the landscape in the creation of a potentially meaningful taskscape (after Conneller 2000; Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Deleuze and Guattari 2004 [1972]; Gosden and Marshall 1999; Ingold 1993). The taskscape enriched with material culture serves as the forum for academic enquiry into identity and group identities. Let me clarify what is meant by the 'relational continuum'. It is a shorthand for the relations of human with human with non-human with non-human in the lived-world, and the repetitive character of the ebbs and flows, connections and disconnections of those relations understood as multiple cross-cutting rhizomatic *chaînes opératoires* (after Conneller 2011; Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980]; Harman 2002, 167; Latour 1993 [1991]; 2005; Olsen 2010, 9).

This paper fundamentally encapsulates three key points of enquiry. Firstly, the Deleuzian notions of repetition, difference and becoming are briefly explained as integral to an understanding of identity. Secondly, the weave of technology with people and things as an inseparable concept is touched upon. Thirdly, an interpretation is offered to clarify the recursive relation of identity to group identities. The brief case study draws upon the key factors and highlights difficulties encountered in academic enquiry by the analyst in the quest to seek out identity and group identities from the analysis of lithic assemblages of West Central Scotland during the Mesolithic period.

A central tenet of Deleuzian philosophy is the notion that there is no identity (Deleuze 2004 [1968]), which may be understood by analogy to rhizomatics where things are forever in a state of construction and reconstruction within the relational continuum (after Deleuze and Guattari 2004 [1972]). Things are, therefore, never ‘well-defined’ and cannot have a definitive or fixed identity. This is explained by repetition as a perpetual sphere of becoming different (Deleuze 2004 [1968]). The paradox of an identity that is ‘well-defined’ and things that are in a continuous state of becoming different is reconciled when the lithic artefact is understood as a moment of becoming within the relational continuum; the identity of the person as technology is fixed within that moment.

The next stage in the journey was to create a pathway to make enquiry into the identity and group identities of the people who created the taskscape (after Ingold 1993). This was accomplished by drawing in concepts from philosophy (Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Heidegger 1962 [1927]), anthropology (Shankar 2006), sociology (Bourdieu 1977 [1972]; Sawyer 2002; 2003), psychology (Burke and Stets 1999; Stets and Burke 2000) and analytical philosophy (Kim 1990 and others). The resultant theoretical *bricolage* forms one of the interwoven strands in the structure of my research. This highlights an unavoidable tension in the use of abstract notions from the philosophical academic enquiry of the ‘living’ to offer an understanding of identity and group identities in prehistory. Implicit within the *bricolage* is that the materiality of stone should not be reduced to a passive raw material but given meaning as a dynamic and living entity within and inseparable from the relational continuum (after Conneller 2011, 13; Ingold 2007; Stout 2002, 704).

The *bricolage* does not offer a meta-narrative for understanding prehistoric identity; rather, it serves as a structure to facilitate exploring notions of identity from the material culture of West Central Scotland during the Mesolithic period. It is because of this approach that I have chosen to avoid theoretically contentious and value-laden terminologies such as ‘individual’ and ‘dividual’ (cf. Knapp and van Dommelen 2008 and respondents).

Philosophy and archaeology

The incorporation of aspects of Deleuzian concepts into a structure for understanding the past follows a well-trodden path of archaeologists recasting philosophical insights to facilitate ‘alternate ways of knowing, conceiving of, and writing about, the past’ (Knapp 1996, 151). For example, there is the work of Heidegger (1962 [1927]) and Merleau-Ponty (1962 [1945]) in Gosden (1994), Tilley (1994), Thomas (1999) and Olsen (2010); Gadamer (1976) in Hodder (1991a; b) and many others instances of archaeologists incorporating Marxist theory. Dobres’ (2001, 48) concept of ‘meaning in the making’ was developed from her interpretation of prehistoric technology as ‘sensuous’ and was formulated from a critical analysis of the writings of Kant, Dessaur, Mumford, Ortega y Gasset and Heidegger (cf. Dobres 2000, 72–95). However, I am mindful of the dangers highlighted by Miller (2010, 79–80) in stating that:

Academics tempted by the promise of an easy and assured claim to cleverness, create vast circulations of obscure and impressive citations. A scattering of names such as Lacan or Deleuze and Guattari is usually a good sign of such oppressive conceits.

Philosophy is often inaccessible to those in other disciplines; a category in which Deleuze sits comfortably. In using philosophical concepts there is a fine line between challenging and losing the reader. The latter is a trap that I seek to avoid, as Miller (2010, 80) goes on to say:

It is only through the subsequent processes of maturing and re-grounding theory in its application to everyday lives and languages that such cleverness becomes transformed into understanding and re-directed to a compassionate embrace, rather than an aloof distaste.

It may be prudent to explain why Deleuzian philosophy features so strongly in my journey in abstract. Until comparatively recently, his work has been largely ignored in archaeology, except for the concept of rhizomatics developed in his later work with Felix Guattari (Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980]; 2004 [1972]). For example, it has been used for discourses on archaeological interpretation and the structure of thought (cf. Shanks 1992; Shanks and Hodder 1995; Tilley 1993), and incorporated into aspects of landscape theory (cf. Conneller 2000). Deleuze and Guattari are intrinsic to Latour's (1993 [1991]; 2005, 77) concept of symmetry and subsequent symmetrical approaches in archaeology (cf. Hodder 2012; Jensen and Rødje 2010, 2; Webmoor and Witmore 2008 and others). The relations within the connections of the relational continuum are always immanent, i.e. 'with' and not 'to', thereby avoiding the dialectic of making one thing transcendent to another (Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980]). Dialectics has been described as 'the most classical and well reflected, oldest and weariest kind of thought' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980], 5).

Derrida (2001, 192–93), writing after Deleuze's death in 1995, summarised *Difference and Repetition*: '[Deleuze speaks of]...an irreducible difference "more profound" than a contradiction'. If identity is about anything, it may be said to be about transformations, i.e. its negotiation and renegotiation at the intersections of the cross-cutting rhizomatic *chaînes opératoires* that form the relational continuum. Parr (2010b, 226) explains that 'repetition is the creative activity of transformation...and an understanding of difference.'

Becoming different

The basis of my enquiry into identity and group identities from the material culture of West Central Scotland during the Mesolithic period focuses on the concepts of repetition and difference, which is a tri-partite phenomenon comprised of two principles, three repetitions, and three syntheses (cf. Deleuze 2004 [1968]).

The second principle in the Deleuzian scheme is 'forget everything'. Deleuze informs us that it is intensities, i.e. stimuli which may be memories, something

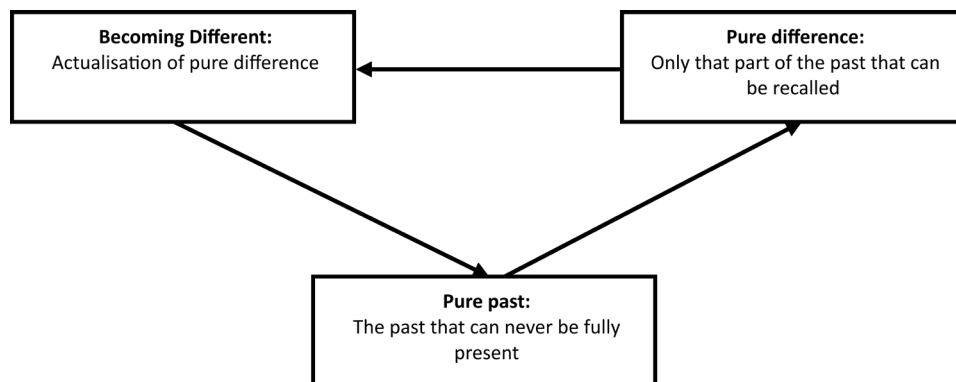


Fig. 9.1: The relation of the pure past to pure difference and the actualisation of pure difference as becoming different (after Deleuze 2004 [1968]).

imagined, thought or uttered that promise becoming different. They are at the same time virtual and real events in the process of creating the tangible manifestation of difference (Boundas 2010a; Deleuze 2004 [1968], 280–82). For example, all that is the past is understood as virtual, i.e. the pure past, on the basis that a memory cannot fully presence the past, and this imperfect memory is referred to as either pure difference or difference in itself. The reality is the actualisation of this pure difference, the materialisation of becoming different (Fig. 9.1). Pure difference is the singularity of becoming different for each person, thing and moment (Deleuze 1988 [1966]; 2004 [1968], 142–46; Stagoll 2010a).

As can be seen in figure 9.1, becoming different is a dynamic concept and is a form of presencing the past with its origins in repetition (Boundas 2010b; Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Lampert 2009). Although counter-intuitive to western rationalisation (cf. Brück 1999), it is important to stress that for Deleuze ‘identity’ does not have a primacy over difference (Deleuze 2004 [1968]). For example, the ‘identity’ of either a person or thing is not because they have a different ‘identity’ to other people or things, it is difference as becoming different that creates singularities (Deleuze 2004 [1968], xvii). Drawing on the doctrine of eternal return (Nietzsche 1961 [1883–85]) rewritten as the ‘repetition of the eternal return’ on the basis that it is only difference that returns (Deleuze 2004 [1968], 374), becoming different is always in the middle. This underlies the concept that people and things are never well-defined, and why the recurrent theme throughout *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 2004 [1968]) is that there is no identity (Williams 2003, 14). It is different trajectories within the relational continuum that create different identities. As such, people and things can be understood as events (Colebrook 2009, 9; Deleuze 2004 [1968]).

Let me clarify the philosophical understanding of people and things as events. Events are a conflation of the repetition of intensities within the relational continuum,

creating difference. As events, we are challenged to think of about understanding them as *chaînes opératoires* and not using the flawed concept of biography (*contra* Kopytoff 1986). Becoming different is the manifestation of difference which actualises the multi-authorship of people and things. The concept of multi-authorship is not the construction of the 'social' in the sense of either 'society' or the 'social dimension' (*contra* Finlay 2003; Strathern 1988; Williams 2003), but the product of cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires* in the lived world, i.e. the relational continuum.

The lithic struck from a core is an event emanating from an intensity, a moment of repetition within a series of events in the creation or assembling of a lithic scatter. The lithic moves from the actual to the pure past/virtual and so on as each lithic is detached or modified. Although the lithics may be typologically similar, a concept of negative difference (Deleuze 2004 [1968], xviii), they are singularities on the basis of becoming different because of the actualisation of pure difference (Fig. 9.1). A subsequent series of intensities actualised as events creates the palimpsest. Each lithic changes the inherent nature of the whole by presencing either some or all of the earlier intensities and resultant events. It is important to understand that becoming different is not determined by events but the intensities that go to make up an event (Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Stagoll 2010b) emanating either consciously or unconsciously from stimuli triggered by relations within the connections in the cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires*.

The nexus of technology and 'identity'

The case that people and technology during the Mesolithic period are inseparable has been made elsewhere (Wright 2012; in press). This interpretation is drawn from primary and secondary philosophical texts (Buchanan 2008; Colebrook 2006; Deleuze 1986 [1983]; 1988 [1966]; Deleuze and Guattari 2004 [1972]). People as technology and things as technology can be understood as a Möbius strip; one side of the two sides of a sheet of paper (Wright in press). This goes beyond Dobres' (2001, 48) concept of a sensuous technology which is described as 'meaning in the making', where technology is 'a simultaneously personal and collective body of experiences engendered through the hands of knowing, thinking and feeling agents'. For the purposes of my research, technology cannot be understood as extrasomatic (cf. Dobres 2001, 49). Technology may be explained as the recurrent correlation of the concept of the deterritorialised hand with the core within the relational continuum. Deterritorialisation in this sense is both transformative and indicates a recursive relation of people with things, i.e. the hands cannot be separated from the percussor and the core (after Deleuze and Guattari 1994 [1991]; Parr 2010a). People as technology determines that they can be restyled as the multi-authored technicians.

It was Kopytoff (1986) who suggested that things cannot be completely understood by looking at only a given point in their existence. The *chaîne opératoires* of people and things are inextricably woven together in a sequence of cross-cutting repetitive transformations through time, movement and change.

A redefinition of Deleuzian concepts would state that people and things cannot exist prior to the relational continuum as opposed to the 'social' (contra Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Williams 2003). The relational continuum is the forum for forging and the perpetual renegotiation of 'identity' (cf. Gosden and Marshall 1999, 173), i.e. becoming different. It determines that as people are multi-authored, so too are things. These transforming singularities are a result of the cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires*. The symmetrical trajectory of things within the relational continuum implies that things can be considered as '...detached parts of people...where people can be subject and object' (Gosden and Marshall 1999, 173). The lithic scatter is not only the manifestation of the taskscape but also the relation of people as technology with things as technology. This may be distinguished from 'mutual becoming of people and objects' (Dobres 2010, 104) on the basis that, for Dobres, people and things are defined in opposition (Wright 2012). The multi-authored technician is then recast as the partible, distributed, multi-authored technician (after Chapman 2000; Gosden and Marshall 1999; Strathern 1988).

The materiality of stone as a living entity (Stout 2002, 704) may be understood as a mode of being (Deleuze 1990 [1969]; Message 2010, 39). The Balyo people of Irian Jaya (Indonesian New Guinea) believe that stone ages; it is imbued with a life-cycle, cosmological significance, and is given names. The older the stone, the better, mirroring the perception of a person's technological prowess (Stout 2002). The entanglement of the concepts of personhood (cf. Fowler 2004, 4) and a dynamic materiality fits coherently with an abstract and meaningful understanding of a technology, as both concept and method, which is folded into people and things within the rhizomatic character of the relational continuum (Deleuze 1993 [1988]; 2004 [1968]; Gosden and Marshall 1999). To deny the multi-authorship of the partible, distributed, technician and things may serve to constrain our understanding of becoming different by repetition that is the relational continuum (Derrida 2003, 90; Finlay 2003).

In contradiction to Edmonds (1997), the lithic scatter is not the embodied material remains of past actions, but fragments of the multiplicity of facets that is identity, as becoming different forged in the relational continuum. The *chaîne opératoire* in its methodological guise is the medium for analysis of lithic artefacts, which may provide the insight for academic enquiries into recognising and giving meaning to identity and group identities. The lithic assemblage is potentially representative of each stage in the *chaîne opératoire*, a conflation of moments of the actualisation of becoming different from intensities creating events; fragments of identity frozen in time.

Group identities

It is important to be cognisant of the caveats regarding ethnographic analogy across time (Jordan 2006; Spikins 2000) and contemporary analogy across space (Warren 2007). Ethnographies from the temperate coast of western Canada indicate average

group/band sizes of 50–60 people within wider open communities of 280 (Layton and O'Hara 2010, Table 5.1). These communities facilitate the movement of people between the constituent groups, where the composition of groups are defined as both fluid and permeable. It is usual for hunter-gatherer groups to have entitlement, although not absolute claims to resources within their environs (Layton and O'Hara 2010).

It may be possible to consider variations in raw material procurement strategies as a potential indicator for the characterisation and differentiation of hunter-gatherer groups (e.g. Hardy and Wickham-Jones 2007; Wickham-Jones 1990). This makes the assumption that raw material distinctions are indicative of events meaningful to different groups of hunter-gatherers. This may be explained in Deleuzian terms. Zourabichvili (2004, 99) informs us that difference is a forum for communication. For example, the lithic assemblage may be said to represent the diachronic links to place, and it is those links across the landscape to raw material resources, i.e. cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires*, that may offer insights into an interpretation of distinctive group identities (Viveiros de Castro 2010; Zourabichvili 2004). Differences in raw material use and procurement have been used in determining the taskscape of hunter-gatherer groups as regionalities (e.g. Clarke and Griffiths 1990; Finlayson 1989; 1990; Wickham-Jones 1986; 1990).

The continuity of technological practice would seem to challenge the concepts of repetition and difference, where the relational continuum is the medium for difference which is created by repetition (Deleuze 2004 [1968]). How can the apparent contradiction of the 'stasis of technological practice' as a macro-phenomenon be explained? Firstly, the lithic assemblage is the product of technological practice. It is important to distinguish 'assembling' from 'assemblage'. The 'assembling' of the lithic assemblage is difference by repetition. For example, as the flake is struck from the core and falls to the ground – difference is mereological – the core, flake and assemblage are transformed. Even as a macro-phenomenon, difference is inherent. The product of the continuity of technological practice is common difference, a term borrowed from Wilk (2004, 81). The emphasis is of 'difference' over 'similarity'.

Secondly, the importance of material culture as metaconsumptive practice within groups was the focus of Shankar's (2006) study of the South Asian American Desi communities of Silicon Valley in California. Shankar (2006) sought to demonstrate that it was not material culture that had agency, but the objectification of practice relating to material culture within a performance setting. Shankar's metaconsumptive practice can be rewritten not as agentic but the relation between the human and non-human. For Deleuze, this relation is in itself a thing (Deleuze and Parnet 1977, 55). It may, therefore, be argued that the continuity of technological practice cannot be regarded as passive but as a dynamic played out within the relational continuum. As such where repetition for Bourdieu (1977 [1972]) is explicit as a 'way of doing', repetition for Deleuze (2004 [1968]) is a 'way of becoming'. In this sense a 'way of becoming' understood as a 'way of being Mesolithic'.

The macro-phenomenon of the continuity of technological practice appears to highlight disconnections in the Deleuzian scheme for variation forced by the performance of 'being Mesolithic', in the sense of belonging to a broader constituency. The dynamic of the 'being Mesolithic' obfuscates distinctions between different groups of hunter-gatherers. Studies on group identity in psychology suggest that the membership of a group is a form of self-verification within that group, representing normative behavioural practice. The psychologists maintain that a person's agency has to be initially constrained to join the group, and it is then enhanced by being a member of the group, which in turn is augmented by that person's membership (cf. Burke and Stets 1999; Stets and Burke 2000). Although not referred to in the psychological texts referenced, the theoretical underpinning to this may be found in analytical philosophy, with the notion of supervenience (Fig. 9.2) (cf. Kim 1990).

Supervenience, as a model to articulate the dependent relations between distinctive properties, was first expressed as a concept 90 years ago (Moore 1922; Seager 1988, 697). Where there are a minimum of two sets of properties there can

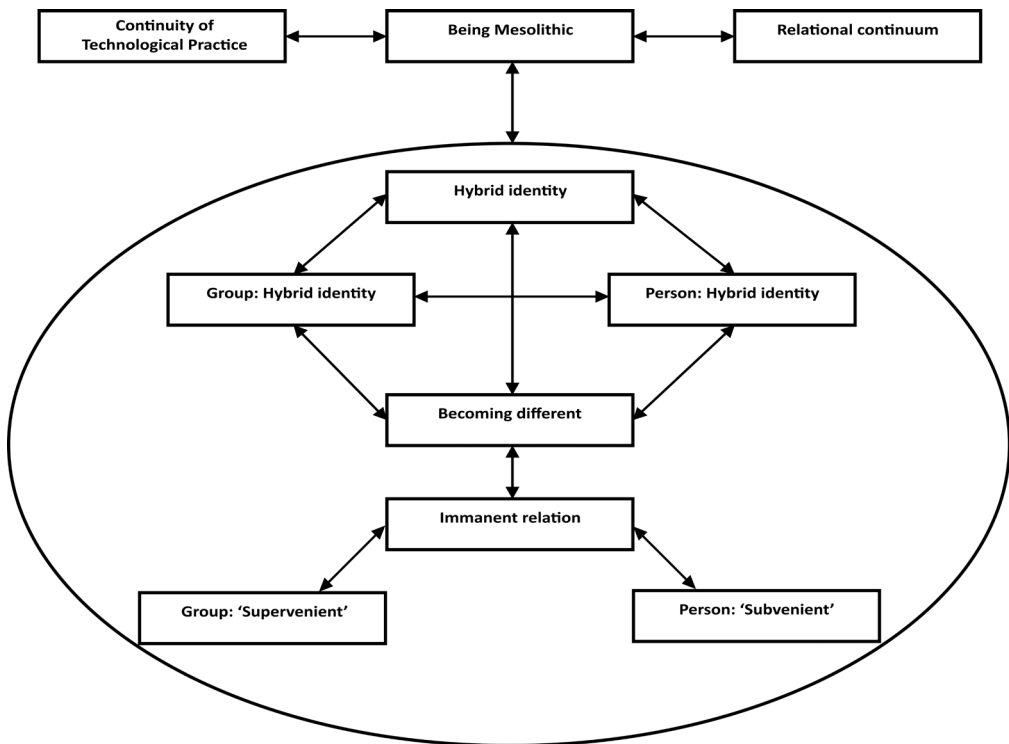


Fig. 9.2: Diagrammatic schema for supervenience (after Kim 1990) replacing the term covariation with becoming different (after Deleuze 2004 [1968]). Relation in this case is weak supervenience (cf. Kim 1990, 9–11).

be no variation in one without variation in the other, i.e. covariation, or *becoming different* in Deleuzian terminology. The relation is where the supervenient set of properties supervenes upon the subvenient set (after Kim 1990; Nightshade 2001). Supervenience is, in this sense, mereological as it concerns difference arising from the relation of the base properties of the supervenient and subvenient, both in total and from component to component (Boogerd *et al.* 2005, 134–35; Kim 1984, 154). For the purposes of this study, the accent is on the notion of weak supervenience in becoming different (Kim 1984; 1990). The terms ‘supervenient’ and ‘subvenient’ imply that the group is transcendent. Here it is important to distinguish the difference between ‘connection’ and the ‘relation’ within that. There may be a power imbalance in the former but the latter is always immanent within the relational continuum (after Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980]). The terminology is retained for ease of reference. For example, let us assume that a hunter-gatherer joins another group within the wider community, perhaps as a levelling mechanism to avoid confrontation and disputes (cf. Layton and O’Hara 2010). This will result in hybridity (cf. Jiménez 2011; van Dommelen 2005) as becoming different in terms of the identity of the incomer, the other members of the group and the group identity. The continuity dynamic of ‘being Mesolithic’ within the wider community would facilitate movement between groups; however, becoming different from weak supervenience would be indiscernible in technological practice subverted by the performance of being Mesolithic (after Kim 1993; Rowlands 1995). Indiscernibility is represented in the properties at the ‘supervenient’ and ‘subvenient’ levels (Kim 1997, 188; Sawyer 2002, 543). The supervenient causation of ‘being Mesolithic’ does not require the conscious awareness of the subvenient (Sawyer 2003, 218). This echoes the third synthesis of reciprocal determination which does not depend on conscious choice in becoming different (Deleuze 2004 [1968]). Supervenience reconciles the ‘stasis of technological practice’ to the Deleuzian framework of becoming different. Difference is inherent within the dynamic but is simply indiscernible.

This form of supervenience as hybridity developing within the wider regional communities of hunter-gatherers can be distinguished from that arising out of an external relation between two sets of properties. The latter can be seen in instances of strong supervenience, often over prolonged periods of time, in the diachronic development of hybrid forms of material culture, and what that can say about the transformations of identity and group identities (e.g. Jiménez 2011; van Dommelen 2007).

It may be argued that, for investigations into identity and group identities, a recast symmetrical supervenience is the vehicle that connects the Deleuzian concept of becoming different to those constructions from anthropology (Shankar 2006) and psychology (Burke and Stets 1999; Stets and Burke 2000). Firstly, supervenience may be used to augment an explanation of the continuity of technological practice as ‘being Mesolithic’. Secondly, it sits comfortably alongside the Deleuzian notions of repetition

and difference by demonstrating the dynamism of the relational continuum, where people and groups are entangled in cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires*; an unremitting state of becoming different. Thirdly, it offers an abstractive foundation for hybridity as multi-layered, closely aligned to Deleuzian concepts.

Aspects of identity and group identities in practice: discerning the indiscernible

My research has produced a regional synthesis for West Central Scotland during the Mesolithic period (c. 8250–3700 BC). This is an area where the inland boundaries are demarcated by watersheds (Bartholomew 1895), which suggests that the mainland region can be considered a meaningful geographic unit (cf. Spikins 1999). The regional profile has been constructed from a comparison of the lithic assemblages from mainland coastal and inland sites in a transect (c. 2550 sq. km) from Ballantrae and Girvan on the Ayrshire coast, inland to Loch Doon, South Ayrshire, and beyond to the Daer Valley in South Lanarkshire, including three sites from outwith the transect (Fig. 9.3). The lithic assemblages of West Central Scotland are the taskscapes – the manifestation of the relational continuum.

The character of the lithic resource creating place out of space (Low and Lawrence-Zuniga 2003; Tilley 1994), the lack of surviving organic materials, and the paucity of radiocarbon dates presents real difficulties in determining the chronology of Mesolithic events at intra-site, inter-site, intra-regional and regional scales of enquiry. Implicit within the interpretations arising out of my research is that becoming different derives from the cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires* borne out of the relations within the connections of human with human with non-human with non-human in the lived-world.

The work undertaken on the technological analysis of the assemblages within the research area affirms the continuity of technological practice, as common difference, during the greater part of the Mesolithic period in Scotland. The task of the lithic specialist is to disassemble the assemblage, and through fine grained attribute analysis reassemble it to give meaning and understanding to some of the events made manifest from the intensities of the relational continuum. The reassembling allows the analyst to appreciate difference by repetition – discerning the indiscernible.

As a macro-phenomenon the continuity of technological practice further demonstrates the effectiveness of an interpretation based upon the performance, i.e. the relation of people with things, of being Mesolithic, weak supervenience, and the indiscernibility of becoming different as a technological concept. For example, the analysis reveals common differences for the contemporaneous and complementary use of bipolar and platform reduction strategies, the use of simple platforms for bipolar and platform reduction, the preference for the use of a soft

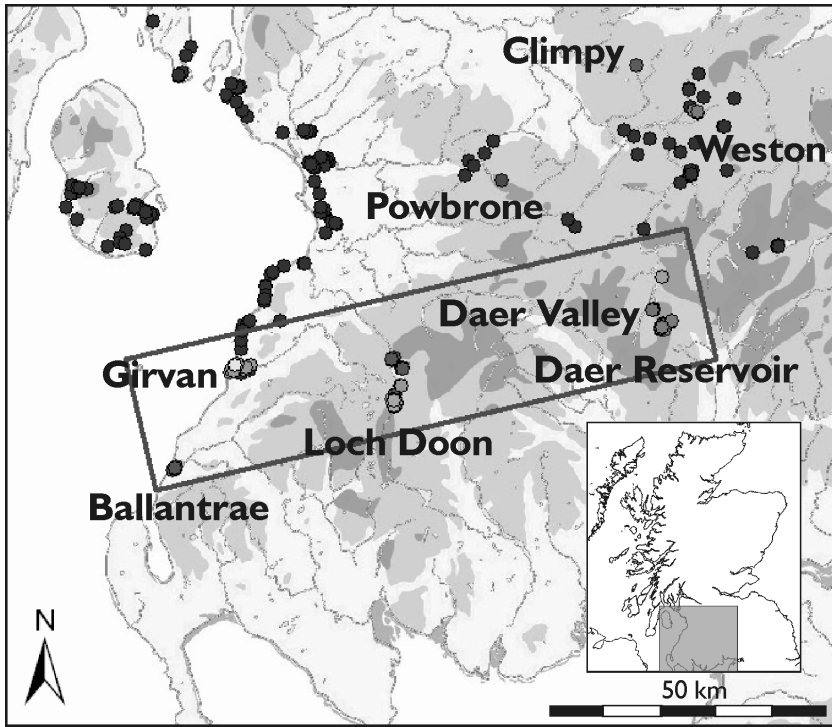


Fig. 9.3: The Mesolithic sites of West Central Scotland and the research transect (map by Ryan K. McNutt).

hammerstone, the presence of blade industries, the form of microlithic retouch, the proximal profile of blades, and the use of blade segments for retooling. However, each assemblage is the product of ‘assembling’ difference by repetition. What can the patterning in the lithic scatters of the Mesolithic period really tell us about identity and group identities?

From a technological perspective it is rare to be able to differentiate the work of one person from another. It often comes down to the granularity of technological attribute analysis in the form of retouch, coupled with the lateralisation of artefacts, refitting blanks, and the sometimes profound common differences in the morphology of modified artefacts. The composition of the lithic assemblage may give indications of task differentiation at an inter-site level of enquiry. The analyst can only recognise and give meaning to minor aspects of the multiplicity of facets of personal identity fixed in moments of intensities of becoming different. Understanding technology as somatic (Wright in press) and people and things as simultaneously multi-authored within the relational continuum (Finlay 2003; Gosden and Marshall 1999), it is still only possible to see the identity of the partible, distributed, multi-authored technician in grey – undefined.

It is the first stage of the *chaîne opératoire* in which the analyst can potentially distinguish different hunter-gatherer groups in the taskscapes of West Central Scotland. The distinction of raw material attributes is representative of differential procurement strategies, which in turn reference different resource locations in the landscape. It may be argued, as others undertaking research in Scotland have done (see above), that these distinctions in raw materials are the manifestation of becoming different, and as such permit the recognition of differentiated hunter-gatherer groups. This implies that use of certain raw materials may have been culturally proscribed.

Flint dominates the coastal assemblages despite the availability of chert on the coast of South Ayrshire (Armstrong *et al.* 1999; Wright 2012). The cortical, i.e. the original outer surface of the flint, indicates the use of beach pebbles and riverine resources from fluvio-glacial deposits. It is not possible to distinguish the occupational events at Ballantrae and Girvan by raw material choice, although subtle differences in the percentage frequencies of certain forms of modified artefacts indicate task differentiation and possibly different temporal episodes of activity.

The evidence from the inland lithic assemblages is more complex. It must be remembered that the sites are palimpsests of two or more events. Generally, chert is the most common raw material; however, at Daer Reservoir 1 and 3 flint dominates the assemblage. This pattern is not reflected in any other of the 40 Mesolithic sites at Daer Reservoir. Flint artefacts have also been recovered from sites at Coom Rig in Daer Valley c. 2 km to the north-west of Daer Reservoir. The sites with the highest percentage frequency of flint are Daer 104 (58.9%), Daer 123 (21.2%) and Daer 114 (12.7%). Daer Reservoir 1 and 3 can also be distinguished by the bluish-grey hues of flint and chalcedony and the presence at Daer Reservoir 1 of the enigmatic siliceous 'blue stone'.

It is possible that the presence of flint is a temporal marker and may indicate pioneering incursions of hunter-gatherer groups inland from the coast (Finlayson 1989), where subsequent events may be related to hunter-gatherers who are becoming different by forging new group identities inland (Larsson 2007), as indicated by the predominant use of chert. Radiolarian chert can be found across the Southern Uplands, from the Ayrshire coast east to East Lothian and Berwickshire (Owen *et al.* 1999a; b). Variations in the cortical surface of chert suggest different procurement strategies by different hunter-gatherer groups. For example, the dominant forms of chert at Daer 84 and Daer 85, which are only 50 m apart, present a smooth/hard cortex and a smooth/chalky cortex, respectively. The chert recovered from the sites in Daer Valley is the ubiquitous greenish-grey which is also noted at Daer Reservoir, although the bluish-grey chert from Daer Reservoir is not recorded elsewhere.

If flint can be understood as an indicator of pioneer incursions then a number of differentiated hunter-gatherer groups may have been responsible for Mesolithic events at Daer Reservoir. Firstly, the groups who resourced bluish-grey flint were possibly moving inland through the Southern Uplands from the Solway coast. Secondly, the groups utilising grey flint resources were potentially travelling inland from the Ayrshire coast, and may have also been responsible for Mesolithic events

in Daer Valley. The colour attributes of chert suggest a common difference in the boundaries of movement and occupational events. The subsequent occupations for the Southern Uplands groups did not extend beyond Daer Reservoir, while the eastern groups' occupations incorporated Daer Valley and Daer Reservoir. The evidence of the cortical attributes of chert from Daer 84 and Daer 85 in the Daer Valley suggests a minimum of two potentially distinguishable eastern groups operating within the same geographic locations. This does not imply that these groups were necessarily contemporary, in which case the palimpsests may be said to take on the character of a 'spatial mnemonic' (Gatewood 1985, 206–207) of temporal group identities. The lithics as intensities of the pure past may on actualisation as 'memory moments' affirm group identities and reaffirm ancestral claims to place, raw material resources, and alliances with other hunter-gatherer groups who may have undertaken activities at the same sites, e.g. Daer 84 and Daer 85.

Conclusion

Events are forged by the intensities emanating from connections arising out of cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires* within the relational continuum. These events are contributing to a constant state of becoming different. Is it possible to understand identity from the archaeological record, or is it an aspiration that is simply not achievable? Perhaps what we can achieve is an interpretation understood by the Deleuzian concepts of repetition, difference and becoming. The character of the archaeological record for West Central Scotland, and in particular the continuity of technological practice as 'being Mesolithic' across the greater part of the period, determines that identity of the partible, distributed, multi-authored technician of the Mesolithic is a shadowy figure – undefined. The search to give meaning and understand identity is nevertheless a valid line of academic enquiry (cf. Maldonado and Russell, this volume), which stresses the importance of a theoretical framework as the structure to interrogate the archaeological record. Regardless of the difficulty, it is incumbent upon the archaeologist to assemble these fragments of becoming different as markers of identity. These markers reveal an insight into aspects of the relations within the connections of the relational continuum. The methodological *chaîne opératoire* incorporated within the theoretical framework forces the analyst to investigate distinctions in the attributes of raw materials – the process of disassembling to reassemble to discern the indiscernible. These distinctions, which may be culturally proscribed, can be interpreted as being representative of differentiated group identities and permit the tentative demarcation of movement and related occupational events.

Research is itself a series of intensities triggered by an investigation into the archaeological record, and the judicious use of both ethnographic and contemporary analogy. If the pure past of the hunter-gatherer of the Mesolithic can never be wholly

recovered, then the archaeologist can only ever encounter pure difference from an incomplete archaeological record of the cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires* actualised as becoming different. Identity is, therefore, a construction of the archaeologist, where meaning and understanding are given to partial aspects of everything that went into actualising the partible, distributed, multi-authored technician. The lithic as an event, where the person is subject and object, can fix identity in a moment of the past. This is not counter to the Deleuzian tenet that there is no identity, because unlike the archaeologist it serves to highlight that Deleuze was writing a philosophy of the living. Perhaps as archaeologists we can agree with Deleuze that with the limitations of the archaeological record of West Central Scotland past identity can never be well-defined.

The journey in abstract has delivered a robust theoretical *bricolage*, and although it has been drawn from many disciplines, it is a structure woven together through the theme of transformation, i.e. becoming different. I believe it may be a suitable vehicle for landscape perspectives, gender studies, an abstract understanding for hybridity in colonial and post-colonial studies, and also to augment both symmetrical and experiential phenomenological approaches in archaeology.

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Chapter 10

Food, Identity and Power Entanglements in South Iberia between the Ninth–Sixth Centuries BC

Beatriz Marín-Aguilera

*(Department of Archaeology, Ghent University,
beatriz.marinaguilera@ugent.be)*

Abstract

From the ninth century BC onward, Phoenicians established permanent colonies all across the Mediterranean, and Iberia was one of the regions where many of their colonies were founded. The Phoenician presence in the central-western Mediterranean has been one of the trending topics in the archaeology of the Early Iron Age, especially since the 1970s. However, scholars have tended to assume that the impact of such colonial contact affected only the indigenous communities, and not the Phoenicians themselves. Colonial situations, on the contrary, always modify both the colonised and the coloniser's identity. It creates a new space for the negotiation of identity opening new social configurations, inequalities and power asymmetries. This paper explores the articulation of such space through the analysis of foodways and pottery making between the ninth–sixth centuries BC in the area of Málaga (southern Andalusia, Spain).

Keywords: *Early Iron Age, Iberia, Phoenicians, indigenous communities, foodways, pottery making*

Introduction

The rich eats, the poor feeds himself

Francisco de Quevedo, Spanish writer (1580–1645)

From the ninth century BC onwards, Phoenicians established permanent colonies all across the Mediterranean (Fig. 10.1). One of the earliest settlements was Morro de Mezquitilla in Málaga, together with Carthage in Tunis, Sulcis in Sardinia, and Castillo

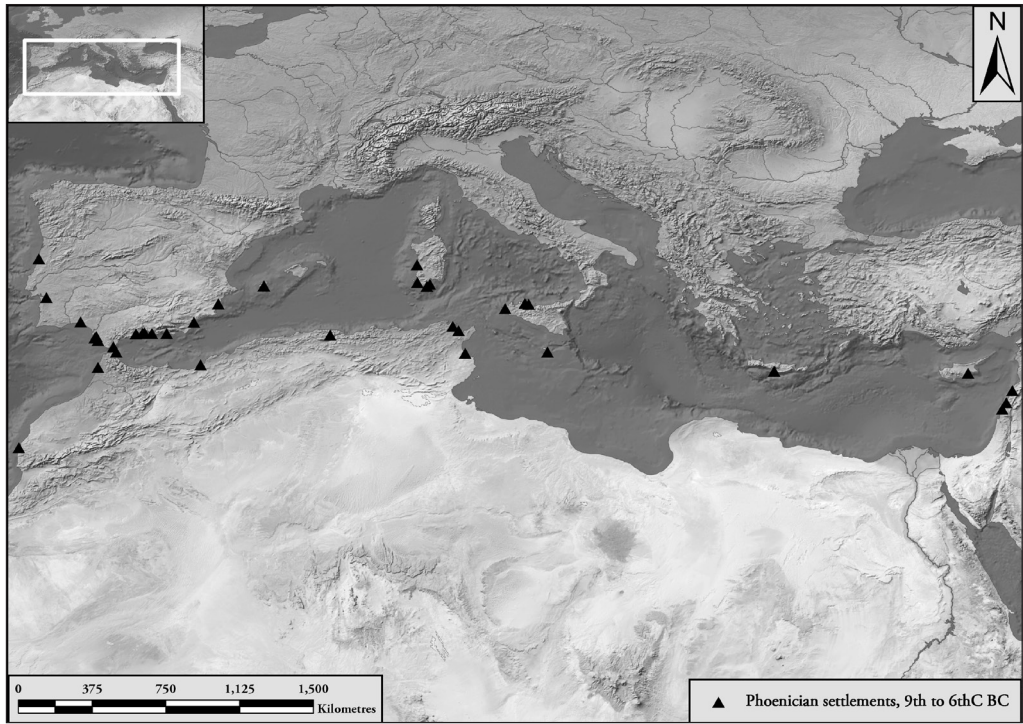


Fig. 10.1: Distribution of Phoenician settlements across the Mediterranean (map by Ryan K. McNutt).

de Doña Blanca in Cádiz (Aubet 2001, 308). The nature of the relationship between Phoenicians and locals in Iberia is still a controversial matter, although scholars seem to agree that in terms of economy, this was based on mutual dependence (Aubet 2001, 351–52; Vives-Ferrándiz 2008; Sanmartí 2009, 56–57). Theoretical discussions regarding Phoenicians in Iberia from the ninth to the seventh/sixth centuries BC are scarce, however (Wagner 2000; Aubet 2001; Vives-Ferrándiz 2008; Dietler 2009). Overall discussions based on the entire body of evidence have generally followed social evolution, prestige-goods, acculturation and world-system models (Wagner 2000; Aubet 2001; Escacena Carrasco 2005).

There has been often a tendency to see artefacts as an end in themselves rather than evidence of past lives. Furthermore, scholars have been mainly focused on the nature of the Oriental imports (tableware, amphorae, etc.) and on Phoenician architecture in indigenous settlements (cf. Ruiz and Celestino 2001; Jiménez 2002; Celestino and Jiménez 2005). Consequently, much attention has been given to the ‘Orientalising’ phenomenon, understood in the same way as ‘Romanisation’ or ‘Hellenisation’, where local people had little agency (Purcell 2006, 26–27; Riva 2010, 40–43; Marín-Aguilera 2012, 149–50).

More recently there has been a renewed interest in households for gender and culinary analysis in which questions of identity and cultural contact have been revisited (Niveau de Villedary 2006; Delgado and Ferrer 2007; Delgado 2010). The analysis of the way in which Southern communities constructed their identity is an important step in understanding the cultural contact that took place from the end of the ninth century BC onwards. Furthermore, an inquiry into cuisine, cooking practices and the material culture used for those purposes can potentially explain the entanglement of power, habits and memories during the colonial contact. As part of the daily life discourse, cuisine and the utensils and vessels associated with this practice can demonstrate the impact that foreign practices and materials could have in the formation of social groups, and the continuity or the interruption of such processes.

Consequently, this paper will initially define the important concepts of identity, habit and memory in order to evaluate their significance in understanding food habits and cuisine in contact situations and hybrid practices. This will lead to a discussion about the emergence of grey pottery in southern Iberia, closely related to the Phoenician arrival, and the response of indigenous populations. This examination takes us to an analysis of household activities at the local level, where hand-made pottery and grey ware are considered in connection to food and cuisine as a way of understanding identity. The paper concludes with an appraisal of continuity in material culture and food habits on the one hand, and with a study of hybridity and social inequality on the other.

Food, material culture and identity in cultural contact situations

Identity is the way in which a person or a group of persons perceive themselves in relation to others along with the comprehension of the world in which they live (Hernando 2002, 50; Jenkins 2008, 5; Valera 2008, 7). Human beings are born within a cultural structure that determines how they behave in the world, and it is through social interaction that this structure changes. It is then a process of being and becoming, a rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 25); it is not something fixed but something that flows between aspects of a person (Meskell 2007, 24; Jenkins 2008, 5; Anzaldúa 2009, 166).

Identity should be understood in relation to the Deleuzian concepts of habit and memory (Deleuze 2002, 119–20, 132–33). The former is a passive synthesis of moments understood within a continuous cyclical repetition (daily routine, seasons, day/night). This habit is experienced as a living present. Habits are mechanic repetitions informed by past experiences through patterns of perception and action that ensure the continuity and regularity of practices over time (Stagoll 2010, 163). Memory, in contrast, is lived as a linear time, because it is the active synthesis of moments that are never repeated (Wright, this volume).

Cooking activities are part of the everyday social discourse; its repetitiveness is deeply connected to the construction of the habit and strongly linked to social and power relations (Appadurai 1981; Goody 1982; Caplan 1997; Counihan 1999). Moreover,

cuisine and taste are a specific selection of food and technologies by a cultural group or class, so they are cultural and social constructs closely related to worldviews, to the relationship with others and with one's own body (Bourdieu 1984, 193; Falk 1994, 10–11).

Since cuisine is fundamental in creating, reproducing and modifying the habit, it functions as a vehicle for memory: flavours, textures, colours and smells have the capacity to activate powerful emotions among members of the group (Appadurai 1981, 494; Lyons 2007, 350). Technology is then a key component in cuisine as it alters the format, the taste and the characteristics of food, determining whether it is socially and culturally acceptable. As a consequence, cooking and serving wares are as important as food itself, because depending upon size, measure, shape and material (metal vs. clay) they serve different food technologies (steaming, boiling, baking, roasting) and thus different cuisines (Lyons 2007, 347; Delgado 2008, 167).

Nevertheless, such habits can be altered by new experiences. People accommodate their food customs to new situations such as extended cultural contacts, colonialism or migration, albeit with anxiety and great effort (Ortiz 1978, 96; Young 1999). In these circumstances when different groups come together, there is both an intensifying of food identity and a growing mixture of cuisines. The insecurity of those situations may propel people into food habits as an identity marker and as a differentiation tool (Reitz 1999; Abu-Shams 2008; Russell, this volume). In situations of crisis, attention is paid to otherwise unnoticed and unconscious practices, and objects can turn into remarkable tools for the unity of the group and for reinforcing their collective identity (Attfield 2000, 14; Olsen 2003, 96).

However, as the unfamiliar creeps into daily life, food and material culture are subjected to change and hybrid practices. In certain situations, hybridity can be unconscious, tending toward fusion, or it can be intentional, where two points of view are placed dialogically against each other without being mixed (Bakhtin 1981, 358–66). Unconscious or 'organic' hybridity refers to the coexistence of different 'languages' within the boundaries of a single utterance (Bakhtin 1981, 358–59). The organic hybrid is thus a fusion, 'an opaque mechanistic mixture of languages' although an extremely productive one (Bakhtin 1981, 366). More interesting is the activity of the intentional hybrid, defined as 'a dialogue between points of view, each with its own concrete language that cannot be translated into the other' (Bakhtin 1981, 76).

Hybridity, however, has been severely criticized from materialistic positions for hiding inequality and conflict in migration and colonial situations (Parry 1987; Ahmad 1994, 207–208; Hardt and Negri 2005, 175–76). Archaeologists have recently questioned it due to its ubiquity, its colonial roots and its depoliticised celebration of cultural mixture (Dietler 2010, 51–52; Pappa 2013; Silliman 2013; *contra* Cañete and Vives-Ferrándiz 2011; Liebmann 2013).

On the contrary, hybrid practices (Campbell, this volume) are political strategies deeply embedded in social inequalities and power asymmetries within the same group or between different groups (Anzaldúa 1987; Santiago 2000; Bhabha in Seshadri-Crooks 2000, 370; García 2003). In archaeology, hybrid practices refer specifically to the use and meaning of objects and technologies in colonial settings, and thus to

the power relations involved in such contexts (Tronchetti and van Dommelen 2005; Liebmann 2013). In this sense, material culture and food habits in contact situations are characterized by the opposition to foreign practices and objects, as well as by the political re-articulation of those new schemes in the habits and memories of both indigenous people and foreigners.

By focusing on these two questions, I would like to explore the ambiguity of food customs and material culture in southern Andalusia in the Early Iron Age (ninth–sixth centuries BC) as well as identify intentional hybrid practices that made people focus their attention on ordinary objects and realise their significance as identity tools.

Grey ware and the Phoenicians' arrival in southern Iberia

Grey ware (GW) is a type of pottery that was produced between the eighth and the sixth centuries BC in the east, west and south of the Iberian Peninsula (Vallejo 2005). Bowls, casseroles, plates and vessel stands are the common repertoire (i.e. tableware) of this kind of pottery (Vallejo 2005, 1156). With stylistic roots in south Iberian Bronze Age pottery, GW was produced under reducing atmospheres, resulting in grey surfaces similar to indigenous fabrics. In accordance with local tradition, the majority of the vessels had open shapes and burnished surfaces, and when motifs of decoration existed, they were geometric and very similar to the Bronze Age ones (Vallejo 2005, 1161–63).

However, GW is also known as 'Orientalising' pottery (Lorrio 1988; Vallejo 2005), because its emergence is connected with the Phoenician presence in south Iberia for two main reasons: it is associated with Oriental objects, and it is believed to be wheel-made. The Phoenicians were the first to introduce this technique. There is no evidence for the production of GW before the Phoenician arrival. This type of ceramic commonly appears together with Oriental pottery – Red Slip Ware, *oinochoe*, perfume bottles and oil lamps – but also with pottery vessels of indigenous style in both Phoenician and indigenous sites (Vallejo 2005, 1153).

Although there have not been archaeometric analyses of GW, scholars have assumed that it is wheel-made (see Vallejo 2005 for an overview with references). However, it is challenging to decipher wheel-thrown vessels from pottery made following the coiling technique standardized on a rotating turntable. Archaeometric and X-ray analyses have demonstrated in Italy that it is not easy to distinguish between handmade and wheel-made pottery (Loney 2007; Roppa 2012). There are many mixed techniques whose final results are so similar that it is very difficult to determine whether a pot is wheel-made or not.

Nevertheless, GW does not exist in Phoenician contexts in the Levant or in other Phoenician settlements across the Mediterranean basin (Roos 1982, 54; Maass-Lindemann 2005, 1143). It is very rare in the North African Phoenician settings, where it has been indeed identified as an Andalusian production (Villada *et al.* 2007; Aranegui *et al.* 2011, 314, 317). GW was not yet present in the eighth century BC in any of the Phoenician settlements of Iberia, which means that the production of this ceramic may be attributed to the Iberian communities (Maass-Lindemann 2005, 1143).

Household and material practices in the making

Pottery vessels change through time and space due to food variation and preparation. One of the best ways of understanding pottery function is exploring food preparation and consumption, as it is used mainly for that purpose. Although cuisine is deeply rooted in cultural and social constructs, and thus strongly connected to identity, conservatism in food habits can be challenged by migration, colonisation, technological innovations and class differences (Goody 1982, 150–53). As a consequence, variations in the types and capacities of vessels are indicative of changes in food preparation along with food-serving and consuming practices (Mills 1999). The introduction of new ceramics is thus closely related to the introduction of new foods (Arnold 1999; Skibo and Blinman 1999; Skibo 2013).

Material practices in southern Andalusia

Between the ninth and sixth centuries BC, southern Iberians faced an ambivalent colonial situation, in which foreign people with different habits and traditions founded several settlements along the Mediterranean coast of Iberia (Fig. 10.2). Phoenicians had a distinct pottery technology and diverse food habits that contrasted with local

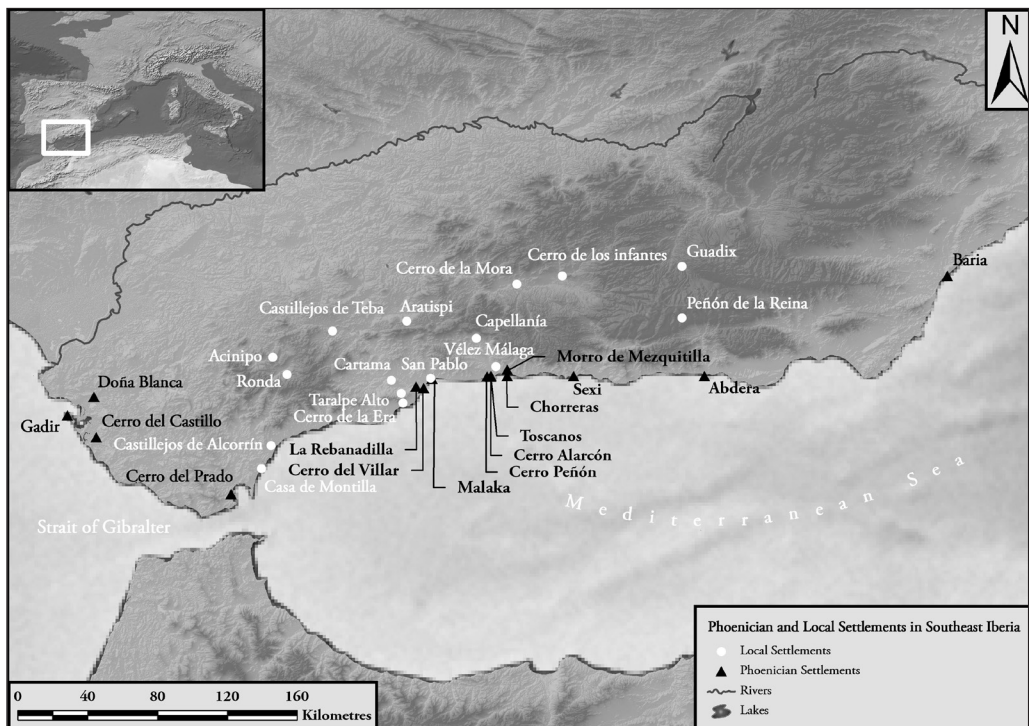


Fig. 10.2: Distribution of Phoenician and local settlements in Southern Andalusia (map by Ryan K. McNutt).

customs and beliefs. Hand-made and wheel-made bowls, spouted jugs, three-lobed spouted pitchers, cooking pots, and plates composed the common cooking and serving ware of Phoenicians (Núñez 2010; 2011). In contrast, hand-made bowls, cooking pots and casseroles formed the main pottery repertoire of local communities in the Málaga area (García 2007, 276–309). Plates, jugs and pitchers were unknown in southern communities, probably because they were not appropriate for their type of cuisine.

South Iberian communities continued to make and use the same collection of hand-made vessels that were in use during the Bronze Age period, making it extremely difficult to tell the difference between the Bronze Age types and the Iron Age ones (García 2007, 275). The hand-made cooking pot (*olla*) appeared in every known settlement between the ninth to sixth centuries BC, such as the ones at Castillejos de Alcorrín, Capellanía and Acinipo, in Málaga (García 2007, 209–300; Marzoli *et al.* 2010, 170). For consumption, hand-made and grey bowls and casseroles were most commonly used among these communities as tableware. Characterized by their open shapes and burnished finish, they have been found at Peñón de la Reina in Almería or at Montilla, Castillejos de Alcorrín and San Pablo, in Málaga (García 2007, 276–96, 349–53).

Nevertheless, Phoenicians introduced new forms in the period between the eighth to sixth centuries BC that were welcomed by southern locals. Storage vessels of Phoenician tradition were common in indigenous settlements, along with new varieties of vessels for serving and consuming food: the Phoenician plate, jug and pitcher, all of them in Red Slip Ware (RSW).

These vessels are very scarce in local domestic contexts and more numerous in cemeteries, which is very suggestive. RSW plates have been found at Castillejos de Teba and Acinipo, both in Málaga, but they are not as abundant as hand-made and grey bowls and casseroles, which still were the common tableware of local populations during this time (García 2007, 324–25). Jugs and pitchers are even more limited in time and distribution in domestic contexts, as they appear restricted to the eighth century BC (García 2007, 325–26). However, both of them have been found in the largest local settlements of the Málaga area (García 2007, 390–93), something that occurred also in southwestern Andalusia (Ruiz and González 1994).

Although grey ware bowls were the common local tableware, grey plates were also present in some settlements of the Mediterranean Andalusia beginning in the eighth century BC (Vallejo 2005; García 2007, 350–53). Grey ware plates followed the RSW plates' typology, but were made under reducing atmospheres, so their colour was not red like Phoenician wares. The distribution of grey plates in domestic contexts is scarce; they have been discovered mainly at Montilla and Acinipo, both in Málaga (Aguayo *et al.* 1991; García 2007, 353).

Culinary practices and food habits in southern Iberia

Archaeobotanic analysis has demonstrated that wheat and particularly barley were the staple foods of both Phoenician settlements and local ones in the Mediterranean

Andalusia (Carrilero *et al.* 2002; Iborra *et al.* 2003; López 2003), probably due to local surplus available for exchange (Aubet and Delgado 2003, 63–64). *Olea europaea* (olive trees), *vitis* (vine) and *prunus* (fruit trees) were also present in domestic contexts of local settlements since the third millennium BC, but it is very likely that they were cultivated only after the Phoenician arrival (Carrilero *et al.* 2002, 78–79; Buxó 2009, 158–59).

Faunal evidence confirms that the inhabitants of local settlements in southern Andalusia consumed goat, lamb, pork and, less commonly, veal (Carrilero *et al.* 2002, 80–81; Iborra *et al.* 2003, 41–42). The high proportion of adult cattle suggests that they were exploited for traction and for secondary products, and a similar pattern of secondary exploitation seems to have functioned for both goats and sheep (Carrilero *et al.* 2002, 82). This means that cereals and legume preparations were the main diet of southern Andalusia population.

Hand-made cooking pots usually have an untreated porous surface and are heavily tempered. This made them particularly strong and long-lasting for extended cooking over a low heat, and thus especially useful for cooking liquid or half-liquid food, such as cereal porridges or soups (Delgado 2010). The association of similar cooking pots with this kind of preparation has been also demonstrated in Etruria (Bedini 1997, 123) and in other Mexican and Peruvian contexts (Brumfiel 1991, 240–41; Cutright 2010, 37, 40). Open and tall ceramic shapes such as hand-made and grey bowls ensure the contents do not spill out of the container when it is being consumed, so they are also specially designed for liquid or half-liquid foods (Brumfiel 1991; Delgado and Ferrer 2007).

Nevertheless, Oriental settlers introduced new plants and animals between the eighth to sixth centuries BC. Forestry techniques for the cultivation and exploitation of olive trees, vine and different fruit trees, along with the generalization of metal tools for agriculture, enabled a capacity of surplus production for local consumption and exchange (López and Adroher 2008, 151; Buxó 2009, 164). In fact, the remnants of wine containers and the analysis of phytoliths has showed that if wine was first imported from the Levant, it was quickly produced in Phoenician settlements in Andalusia where vineyards were cultivated in the surrounding area from the eighth century to seventh century BC (Buxó 2009, 158).

The high proportion and distribution of pithoi and amphorae in southern Andalusia settlements since the seventh century BC demonstrates the importance of wine, oil and fish sauce trade between coastal and interior communities (Aubet and Delgado 2003, 70–71; García 2007, 226–43). As a consequence, local drinks produced by fermenting cereals (similar to beer) were consumed along with wine by local elites.

Although fish consumption, especially the sturgeon, was part of the local diet since the Palaeolithic period, in the Early Iron Age the consumption of fish increased among local communities (Carrilero *et al.* 2002, 89–91; Aguayo *et al.* 2012). Species such as anchovies, sardines and common pandora were absent in local contexts but very common in Phoenician settlements, especially indicative of the preparation of fish sauce that was actively traded (García 2001, 14; Campanella 2008, 74). A Phoenician

amphora that held sturgeon, snapper and dogfish in the form of fish sauce or salted fish was found in a house at Acinipo in Malaga, demonstrating the importance of this type of trade between coastal and interior settlements since the Phoenician arrival (Aguayo *et al.* 2012).

Social differentiation, identity and hybrid practices

The Phoenician contact resulted in social and cultural change in southern Andalusia. Oriental immigrants introduced new food and material culture associated with different domestic, economic and ritual habits and memories that were unusual to local populations. Indigenous responses varied from continuity and innovation to rejection or re-articulation through hybrid practices. Such practices did not affect solely locals but also foreigners, creating an in-between space for the negotiation of identities.

Technology and the introduction of new pottery forms

According to Gosselain (2000, 191–93), three stages can be distinguished in the manufacturing process of pottery. The first is related to techniques that leave perceptible traces on the finished artefacts, such as tempering or mixing clays for modifying texture or colour, or decoration. During this stage a great number of people can influence a potter's choices and thus make those visual characteristics especially vulnerable to being consciously manipulated aesthetically or symbolically.

The second stage involves clay selection, extraction, processing and firing. Although during this stage the manufacturing process is also malleable, the technical process is not visible, and consequently people who may influence the potter are more limited in number.

Finally, the third stage of the manufacturing process is related to the primary forming phase, which does not leave any evidence on the finished object, and it is usually carried out by the potter alone. This part of the process of pottery making involves motor skills and specialised gestures (habits) learnt through repeated practice during the potter's childhood, so they are consequently deeply internalised and difficult to change (van der Leeuw 1993; Gosselain 1998, 2000). As a consequence, potters tend to be in general very conservative regarding their method of forming vessels (Arnold 1989; van der Leeuw 1993; Gosselain 1998).

We do not have any evidence which could demonstrate whether GW pottery was hand-made, wheel-made or made following a mixing of techniques (Gosselain 2000, 192), but it is highly probable that the primary forming phase was not modified by potters as it is determined by the conception that artisans have of their own pottery technology, i.e. how they think pots should be made (van der Leeuw 1993, 241, 256).

Especially notable are the second and the first stage of the manufacturing process. Paste analysis of grey pottery has confirmed the local fabric, and thus the indigenous

production, of this type of pottery (González and Pina 1983; Lorrio 1988). Similarly, GW followed the typology of the local pottery tradition during the processing phase with only one exception, the plate which ‘imitated’ the Phoenician type because it was unknown in southern Iberia before the Phoenician arrival. The firing process was conducted as always under reducing atmospheres in the local tradition of hand-made vessels, even in the case of the plates, instead of firing them under an oxidizing atmosphere to obtain the Phoenician red colour.

The first stage, the one that can be consciously manipulated, is particularly interesting for understanding GW production and meaning. The specific grey colour of this kind of ceramic suggests that potters and other people in their village consciously selected it, as well as the texture of this type of pottery, even in the case of plates that constituted a new introduction (Fig. 10.3). The grey colour resembled the traditional Bronze Age pottery, and thus it brought back community memories in which new objects (mainly plates) were articulated.

The production of grey plates symbolised ‘the perception of one language by another language, its illumination by another linguistic consciousness’ represented in the speech of local potters (Bakhtin 1981, 359). Such an intentional hybrid – partly ‘Phoenician’,

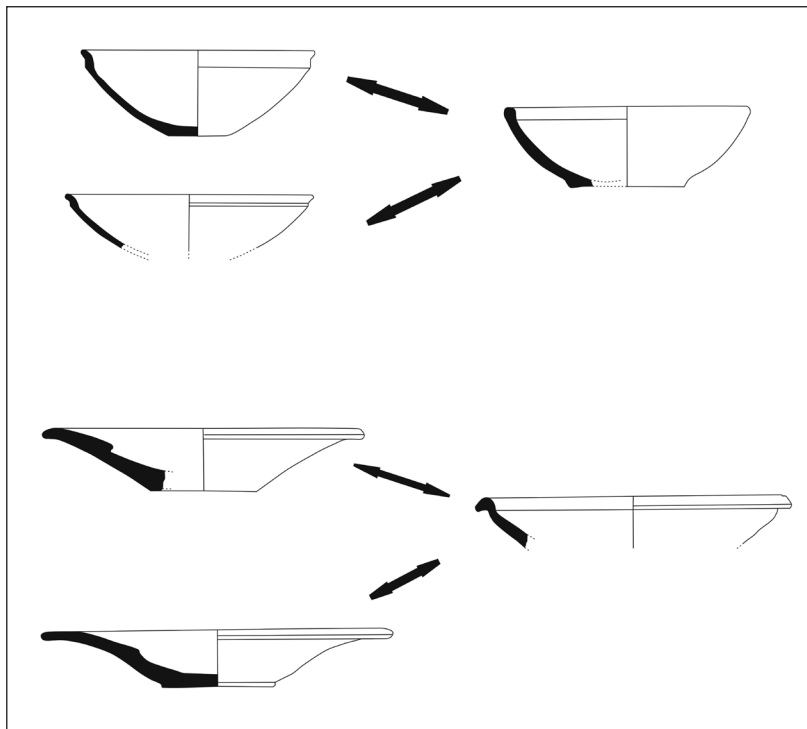


Fig. 10.3: Material culture from the in-between: grey bowl and plate that can be traced back to local and Phoenician types (redrawn by A. Russell after Vallejo 2005, figs. 2 and 5; Schubart 2002, fig. 5).

partly 'local' – created a space of learning and reaction where locals marked their difference and their presence in front of the newcomers (Santiago 2000, 68).

Materiality, social habits and everyday life in southern Andalusia

During the Early Iron Age, when new economic and social relations were emerging in southern Andalusia, the indigenous population focused their attention on objects that were unnoticed and unconsciously used before, such as bowls, and realised their significance as identity tools. Bowls played an important role in the local process of re-building their identity due to the Phoenician contact. Used since the Bronze Age in southern Andalusia (García 2007, 276–96), this type of pottery materialised both the continuity of habits and the social memory of the community, i.e. the way their food *needed to be* consumed. Bowls are the most common type of GW in local settlements (García 2007, 350) because this pottery shape represented local cuisine – mainly cereal porridges and soups – and was consequently in greater demand than any other form.

Plates are also a key point for understanding the reception of Phoenician objects, foods and practices, and thus solidarity among the members of specific social groups. The arrival of plates in indigenous settlements was associated with the introduction of new food and thus new culinary practices. Fish consumption increased due to the Phoenician preservation techniques of salted fish and fish sauce. Similarly, the distribution of RSW jugs and pitchers as serving ware in local contexts, although scarce, demonstrate the introduction of wine and thus new ritual practices related to it (Buxó 2009, 158; Jiménez *et al.* 2005; Hayne, this volume).

Such mixture of tableware and culinary practices was not devoid of power relationships. The organic hybridity of this culinary mixture (Bakhtin 1981, 358–59), was closely related to indigenous elites' consumption and the legitimisation of their power in southern Andalusia.

From the seventh century BC, numerous farming villages were founded in the Málaga region in order to control productive labour camps, and thus obtain agricultural surplus to trade with the coastal settlements (Aubet and Delgado 2003, 70; López and Suárez 2003, 80). High quantities of pithoi and amphorae for wine, oil or salted fish have been recovered from small sites where no or few plates, jugs and pitchers were found, just hand-made cooking pots and bowls of indigenous style (García 2007, 240–44). Grey and RSW plates, along with jugs and pitchers, appear only in those large local settlements that had control over the surrounding territory and people, i.e. where local elites lived (Aguayo *et al.* 1991; García 2007, 390–93).

This suggests that the consumption of new food, along with the serving ware of Phoenician style, was restricted to the elite as a way of differentiation, marking a political division between higher and lower social groups. Interestingly enough, there was not a difference in serving or in cooking ware in southern Iberia before the Phoenician contact (Vallejo 2005; García 2007, 276–96). This rise of social inequality

in the seventh century BC can be also seen in the cemeteries, where burial mounds increased in comparison with the ninth to eighth centuries BC (Marín-Aguilera 2015).

Migration, cuisine and status in the southern Iberian colonies

In the Levantine area, wheat and barley, especially the former, were the staple foods of local populations (Spanò 2005; Campanella 2008, 57), in contrast to southern Andalusia. Eating wheat had a different social consideration than eating barley, which was associated more with deprived groups in the Levant (Spanò 2005; Niveau de Villedary 2006, 59). Nonetheless, barley is the most represented crop in the Phoenician settlements of Southern Andalusia (Iborra *et al.* 2003). Solid preparations of cereals, fried or baked, were associated with higher social status while boiled ones were common among peasants in the same contexts (Spanò 2005, 417; Niveau de Villedary 2006, 59). If in the Phoenician settlements of Iberia, ovens and baking trays for making bread were very scarce (Delgado 2008; 2010), then bread was severely restricted to a few people, even less than in the Levant. As a consequence, bread probably became an important tool for social differentiation and power legitimisation among the inhabitants of the colonies, making the elite an autonomous social space with a distinctive lifestyle (Bourdieu 1984, 260–66).

On the other hand, hand-made vessels especially suited to boiled or cooked preparations of cereals in the form of porridge or soups were very common. This kind of cuisine was typical of poor people in the Levant, and became the staple food of poor (or at least not high-status) Oriental artisans and traders in Iberia. A high percentage of hand-made and grey pottery of indigenous type is present in most of the colonial settlements in the Málaga area along with pottery made in the Phoenician style (Aubert 1974, 1999; Martín 1995; Maass-Lindemann 2002; Sánchez *et al.* 2011; Torres *et al.* 2014).

The adoption of pottery and cuisine of indigenous tradition by Oriental poor or 'middle' social groups marked their social alienation in Iberia and the 'forced' resignation of their Phoenician cuisine, i.e. the necessary imposition of a taste for necessity (Bourdieu 1984, 372). In this regard, indigenous food practices created an in-between space for the negotiation of identity and the reinforcement of solidarity among deprived social groups, similar to the one that emerged in the Spanish colonial cities in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century America (Ome 2006, 53–58, 77–81). Those hybrid practices in turn facilitated the acquisition of new habits and thus new memories as time passed.

Concluding remarks

The Phoenician contact altered the habits of south Iberian communities in two different ways: with the creation of a new type of pottery (GW), and with the introduction of new food and thus new types of pottery and ingredients that consolidated and legitimised social differentiation. Social inequalities also emerged in the colonies, and people consequently adapted to their new situation using indigenous material culture and adopting local cuisine.

In the case of indigenous communities, the insecurity of the contact led them to food habits as a sign of identity and as a tool for ethnic differentiation. As a result, hand-made pottery of indigenous style, particularly cooking pots and bowls, continued to be the mainstay of their cuisine to remind them of traditional textures, flavours and smells that mobilised powerful emotions among the members of the group. That kind of pottery, as especially indicated for liquid and half-liquid preparations of barley, wheat and even meat (cooked or boiled), became a vehicle for memory for southern Andalusia populations, making them feel cohesive.

Interestingly, the same cooking and serving wares, along with the indigenous traditional food, also became part of the habits of the underprivileged inhabitants of the colonial settings. The scarcity of wheat and cooking tools for making solid preparations of cereals in Iberia transformed into a luxury what was originally a more common food in the Levant. The condition of impoverished immigrants facilitated the creation of a new space in which people of different origins actively constructed new identities through food preparation and consumption. In this hybrid context of practices, the material culture of indigenous style played a decisive role in determining not one's ethnic origin, but one's social background.

The adoption of different foods and different culinary practices modified the habits and lifestyle of local elites (Bourdieu 1984, 193), who used them to legitimise their social and political position. In this regard, the introduction of plates and their local production in GW were crucial for the construction of higher status in southern Andalusia. New types of serving and tableware and food were inserted into traditional consumption rituals, as demonstrated by the use of indigenous bowls and casseroles and the grey colour of plates. Hybrid cuisine and practices also involved an antithetical movement of fusion and antagonism, with the unconscious hybrid set against the intentional, emphasising the fusion and yet the difference in cultural, social, economic and ethnic terms. Phoenician elite, on the contrary, stuck to their cultural tradition in terms of food customs and material culture related to it.

If social inequalities were familiar to southern communities in Iberia before the arrival of Phoenicians (Aubert 2001, 136; Delgado 2013), those differences were further consolidated by the economic relationships established with them. These connections in turn strengthened social inequalities and power imbalances through the introduction of new food and tableware (plates), both socially restricted. As a result, social groups were not only demarcated by a distinct position during the process of production, but also by the social habits and lifestyle that were associated with that position (Bourdieu 1984, 372).

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Chapter 11

Proportionalising Practices in the Past: Roman Fragments Beyond the Frontier

Louisa Campbell
(*University of Glasgow*)

Abstract

Discussions of agency often imply that people act freely; however, in the context of conquered Roman provinces in the early centuries AD, action was subject to additional, externally imposed constraints which people variously chose to adhere to or resist, either overtly or covertly. Thus, action can be constrained by structure, and Roman material culture may have been adopted selectively beyond imperial frontiers in adherence with prescribed cultural conditions. This paper incorporates a reassessment of Roman ceramics from non-Roman contexts in northern Britain to suggest that vessel fragments may have served as representative of the whole. These portions thereafter may have actively participated in the construction and negotiation of identities for recipient communities.

Keywords: *Identities; agency; proportionalising practices; Roman; Iron Age; pottery; fragmentation*

Introduction

The effects of Roman conquest during the early centuries AD were differently experienced in northern Britain compared to southern Britain and other parts of the Empire. It is not within the remit of this paper to document the Roman campaigns and occupational phases of Scotland, nor the detailed debate involved, which have been eloquently summarised elsewhere (e.g. Breeze 2007). However, a tabular summary of the consensus view, incorporating the work of Hodgson (1995) and Millett (2000), as well as Swan's (1999) suggested ceramic evidence, is provided for ease of reference to periods of occupation and associated terminology (Fig. 11.1). The evidence confirms two main, but relatively brief, periods of Roman occupation following campaign

AD 77-78	Agricola consolidates northern England and advances north.
AD 79-82	Agricola commences his Scottish campaign and reaches the Tay.
AD 83	The battle of Mons Graupius signifies the completion of Agricola's campaign.
AD 87-105	Roman troops withdraw to the Tyne-Solway isthmus; Agricola departs Britain and troops are transferred to the Danube.
AD 122	Military disturbances bring the Emperor Hadrian to Britain and he commissions the construction of Hadrian's Wall across the Tyne-Solway isthmus.
AD 139-142	Antoninus Pius orders the abandonment of Hadrian's Wall and advances north to Scotland. He commissions the construction of the Antonine Wall across the Clyde-Forth isthmus.
AD 142-149	Construction of the Antonine Wall is completed.
AD 149-150+	Some troops return from Mauretania and the layout of the Antonine Wall and some forts is revised, with some partitioned to make annexes (e.g. Bearsden).
AD 158+	The decision to abandon the Antonine Wall is taken and a refurbishment of Hadrian's Wall commences. Gradual run-down and dismantling of forts on the Antonine Wall.
AD 164-167/8	Old Kilpatrick fort is demolished to complete decommissioning of Antonine Wall.
AD 196-197	Clodius Albinus, Governor of Britain takes troops from Britain to battle the Emperor Severus outside Lyon. Severus emerges victorious and separates Britain into two provinces, Upper and Lower Britain.
AD 197	The Maetae and Caledonians break a peace treaty with Rome and instigate war in the North. Due to troubles elsewhere the Maetae are bribed to make peace.
AD 208-211	More troubles bring the Emperor and his sons, Geta and Caracalla, to Britain and they campaign in Scotland. Severus dies in York and his sons abandon the northern territories.
AD 305-306	Co-Emperor Constantius conducts a campaign in Scotland with his son, Constantine. They reach the far north of Scotland before Constantius dies in York.
AD 360	Troops are transferred to Britain to deal with the Scots and Picts.
AD 364	'Barbarian' raids by Picts, Scots and Saxons are recorded.
AD 367-368	A concerted attack by 'barbarians' destabilises the province and order is finally restored after a major campaign by Count Theodosius.
AD 369-399	General Stilicho undertakes an expedition against the 'barbarians' in Britain, restoring peace.

Fig. 11.1: Timeline of Roman military interaction with Scotland (author's image).

and conquest and one aborted attempt at conquest, followed by occasional punitive campaigns in northern Britain.

These 'brief interludes' (Hanson 2003) resulted in northern Britain coming variously within and outside of the boundaries of Rome during the period. A wealth of material remains survive from the campaigns, including the Antonine Wall, a massive mural

barrier stretching across the Forth-Clyde isthmus, military forts, marching camps and material culture. Some of this material culture found its way onto non-Roman sites and has traditionally been interpreted as evidence for the Romanisation of recipients (e.g. Robertson 1970), usually restricted to elites who controlled its wider access as a means of bolstering their own status (e.g. Hunter 2009). However, this over-simplifies complex processes by which Iron Age occupants of the region selectively adopted, adapted and appropriated foreign things. It denies recipients active choice in their acquisition and fails to explain the role played by this material in constructing and (re) negotiating identities, a situation that has been exacerbated by the reluctance of Roman archaeologists to incorporate social theories into their interpretations (Slofstra 1983).

Recent PhD research (Campbell 2011) confirms that a detailed, theoretically-informed analysis of artefact attributes and contexts of deposition offers a more nuanced framework for interpreting Roman objects from non-Roman contexts in frontier situations. Single or small numbers of sherds dominate Roman ceramic assemblages across northern Britain (with the notable exceptions of Traprain Law, East Lothian), and this paper applies current theoretical constructs to explore the social significance of these vessels and parts thereof. These constructs include discussions of agency, creolization and objectification. Agency theory allows the evidence to be assessed through the lens of the structures that existed within Iron Age communities, and between them and their Roman oppressors, to determine where the 'power to' negotiate identity via the consumption of Roman materials existed. Creolization allows for the interpretation of hybrid materials and practices that result from the interaction between indigenous people and Roman objects, and their potential impact on the identities involved within this asymmetrical power structure. Objectification yields a discussion on how introduced materials outside of a community's traditional *habitus* of production, use and discard will necessarily be objectified differently, resulting in distinct social meanings ascribed to them.

This study will then propose the idea of proportionalising practices as a way to interpret the specific depositional contexts of Roman ceramic materials (most often fragmentary and solitary – i.e. with no two sherds coming from a common vessel). It will be argued that the fragmentary nature has the potential to represent both the whole of the object, as well as the existence of enchainment relationships between their consumers. After discussing these constructs in the abstract, this study will apply them to the 'brief interludes' of Roman-occupied northern Britain, and illustrate what wider interpretations are available concerning the individual and group identities of Iron Age indigenous communities beyond the restrictive, depersonalising framework of Romanisation.

Agency: actors and actions

Agency can be defined as socially significant qualitative action that cannot be reduced to individual action alone (Dobres and Robb 2000, 8), while choice for

action is internalised, generated by and confined to specific social contexts. Thus, like identity, agency is fluid and situationally relevant and society constructs the situations in which people act. Various agencies within any social group are inextricably connected to gender, age, race, class, time or other forms of subjecthood. Agency, or 'power to', is therefore both enabled and constrained by social structure (Dobres and Robb 2000) and people's actions are not always capricious, but rather they constitute complex, multifarious and materially expressed negotiations between actors balancing their own and wider social concerns. Giddens (1979, 53, 69–70) discusses the duality of structure, defining agency and structure as inseparable elements of a single process, whereby agents and structures are co-produced through structuration. Identity cannot be separated from agency as people continually and actively construct, reconstruct and negotiate identity in materially expressed ways (Campbell, in press).

The various strands of academic discourse on the subject of agency, including concerns over concepts of the individual, individualism, individuals and personhood are crystallised by Knapp and van Dommelen (2008). Whilst not denying that people, either in the present-day or in the past, possess their own specific desires and motivations, they are particularly critical of advocates of what they term 'Foucauldian archaeology' (Knapp and van Dommelen 2008, 20), such as Thomas (e.g. 2002), who perpetuate the capitalist and persistent dichotomy between people with power in opposition to others without it. Instead, these authors embrace Bourdieu's practice theory of *habitus*, defined as 'a concept of individuals as a negotiation between differing social and personal concerns. . . . [in] a materially constructed world, one that generates but equally constrains (conscious or unconscious) social experiences of human actors' (Knapp and van Dommelen 2008, 20–22).

Thus, people are capable of perceiving and experiencing themselves in the singular, whose activities are internalised, generated by and confined within the context of their community, thereby reinforcing ties to the community and kinship networks which exist therein. Behaviours are then culturally acquired by people from an early age, cross-culturally variable and inextricably linked to other aspects of subjecthood. They must therefore be understood within the specific context of the society under study by archaeologists seeking to define any of these concepts from material remains.

People 'do' things; they act and interact with other people and with things. Their actions might be recognised in the archaeological record by considering the structures within which such actions are taken and how these actions change temporally and at multiple scales (Joyce and Lopiparo 2005). In the context of Iron Age societies in northern Britain interfacing with the Roman Empire, the selective adoption of specific Roman ceramic forms from vessel types available for consumption provides a good case study for the subject of agency as well as the maintenance and reinforcement of identity within northern communities (Campbell, in prep. a). Detailed analysis of their contexts of use, reuse and deposition may establish how they functioned within these recipient societies (Campbell 2011, 2012a, 2012b, in press).

In common with the study of identities, current theoretical emphasis on agency is placed upon differences and variability across the Empire, taking account of local and regional as well as intra-regional communities (Terrenato 1997, 24; van Dommelen 1997). Rather than thinking of provincial populations as passive participants within the oppressive state of Romanisation or assimilation, we should instead consider personal and collective agency and aspects of resistance on both the material culture and cultural landscape (Alcock 1997). This can clarify the multifarious processes through which people construct new identities, often termed as transculturation, ethnogenesis, creolization or hybridization (Stein 2005, 17). Emulation and creolization contributed to strategies enabling provincial communities to negotiate and reconstruct different hybrid identities (Mattingly 2004, 7), hence the differences between groups referred to as Romano-British, Romano-Gallic, Romano-Hispanic and Daco-Roman (Campbell 2011, 102).

Resistance, persistence and hybrid practice

Discussions of agency often imply that people acted with a degree of freedom; however, many people, such as inhabitants of conquered Roman provinces or slaves, were not always free to act and were subject to a variety of constraints (Webster 2008; Mattingly 2008). If agency or 'power to' is both enabled and constrained by structure (Giddens 1979), people's actions are not always impulsive (Bourdieu 1977). Rather, their conscious and unconscious choices for action form part of strategies to negotiate complex and constantly changing socio-economic and political conditions in response to contact with other cultural groups (Lyon and Papadopoulos 2002, 6). Sometimes, agents or groups of agents decide to resist dominant constraints; however, resistance may be limited by the relations of power existing in a society. For instance, hybrid practices appeared alongside more subtle variations of material culture used in Sardinia (van Dommelen 2005) and hybrid 'Romano-British' pottery function, form and use may imply active resistance to full assimilation into the Empire (Campbell 2012b, in prep. a).

In a move away from previous emphasis placed upon landscape and settlement, more recent archaeological research recognises material culture as an integral component in the construction of identities and the formation and negotiation of new 'creolized' identities within Iron Age communities engaged in variable degrees of contact with Roman incomers (Haselgrove and Moore 2007). The term 'creolization' developed as a reaction against Romanisation. Deriving from linguistic studies to denote the merging of two languages into a new dialectic form, the term has been adopted into archaeology as a means of understanding indigenous perspectives in American archaeological studies (Webster 2001, 217). The concept has been applied as an interpretive framework for understanding the perspectives of societies engaged in contact with foreign incomers. It recognises that reaction to such contact would most likely have been materially expressed, resulting in new practices in the

context of asymmetrical power relations. Links to the past are central to this model and are maintained or altered through the resistance of elite-led motivations and interactions with an incoming dominant culture (Webster 2001, 218).

Discrepant experience also considers the variable perspectives of colonial invaders and indigenous inhabitants of a conquered land to the same event and is a key element of the relationship between imperialists and indigenous societies (Said 1993; Mattingly 1997). Fincham (2001) utilises this concept to good effect in his analysis of consumerism in Roman Britain and Africa. Agency is a key component within this model, and consumerism may be visible in the archaeological record by analysing, on both a regional and site-specific scale, the relationship between contexts of consumption, patterns of association of imported goods, their relative quantitative representation and spatial distribution, as well as the specific properties of the objects selected for import and consumption (Dietler 2005, 66) and *how* they were used and deposited (Owen 2005, 9). Discrepant experience can therefore help us to recognise manifestations of identity as well as chronological, regional and social variation in responses to Rome, including resistance and integration, without emphasising one aspect over the other (Mattingly 2004, 22).

Re-investigation of material culture from the indigenous peoples of the East Anglian Fens before, during and after Roman occupation effectively illustrates how previously supposed evidence of 'poverty' may now be considered a form of active resistance as a means of expressing a vibrant cultural identity (Fincham 1998, 50). Van Dommelen's ground-breaking work on Sardinia considers cultural change and resistance through field survey data following Rome's conquest of Carthage on the island in 238 BC, after the First Punic War. Here regional selectivity may have aided the persistence of local Punic traditions in a form of covert resistance whilst overtly conforming or adapting to Roman rule; indeed, the Romans were in occupation for over two centuries before they can be 'seen' in the archaeological record (van Dommelen 1997; 1998, 44; 2005; 2007, 61). Recent studies have also questioned the role of the Roman army in the purported Romanisation of Italian conscripts, positing that the Social War was, in fact, the result of a failed uprising by Italian communities to regain their independence from Rome as opposed to a successful struggle to gain entry into *res publica* (Mouritsen 1998). Despite centuries of military conscription, some Italian communities are thought to have successfully resisted Romanising influences and continued to maintain a sense of local identities (Pfeilschifter 2007, 29). The communities of northern Britain were similarly able to actively resist assimilation into Roman cultural systems, particularly since the Roman presence was sporadic and short-lived (Hanson 2003).

Actions constrained by structure

As with identity, then, people possess variable degrees of potential for action according to the different social situations in which they engage. Whilst power relations are

inevitably integral to some of this action (Giddens 1984), they are not necessarily the primary driving force propelling it. Some aspects of power may be covert, such as control of feasting or ritual (Hingley 1996, 43). For instance, an ideological leader may have conscious power over the systems of belief and behaviour of members within their congregation. However, they are themselves subject to a variety of restrictions, possibly unconscious, upon the ritualised activities in which they engage according to traditions passed down by ancestors, previous ideological participants, and the community they serve. Similarly, a provincial peasant farmer may be socially and actively constrained by hierarchical elites striving to fulfil their own role within the oppressive mechanisms of Empire. He may simultaneously be revered as the head of a household or extended community and reinforce that status within those contexts while also exercising covert resistance to socially constricting impositions, such as taxation, through clandestine night-time harvesting (Given 2004).

Less obvious, and potentially less archaeologically detectable, forms of human action and intentionality (Gardner 2004) might include culturally enforced prohibitions placed upon people at various times in their life cycle or at specific events (Gosselain 1992; 1999). Ethnographic studies can assist in the determination of culturally significant actions and rituals to which a modern-day archaeologist can remain oblivious (Brück 1999), such as the incorporation of ancestral objects into the forming of new things or tasks and ritualised ceremonies which can only be performed by certain people within the community (Jest 1956). Thus, whilst constraints may be placed upon certain participants involved in various activities at different times, these restrictions may be driven by a desire to maintain, reinforce and renegotiate identities and ancestral connections as opposed to resistance to power structures (Campbell, *in press*). The borrowing of techniques or material culture from other groups may be subtly changed to fit existing socially relevant criteria prevalent within the recipient society (Kopytoff 1986), constituting the processes of hybrid practices, thus explaining and reinforcing the secular with the symbolic.

From an alternative perspective then, the presence of Roman material on non-Roman sites need not imply the recipients' assimilation into Empire. Rather, it might be better explained as foreign objects being appropriated into existing cultural traditions of the people who selectively adopted them and used them within socially acceptable contexts. People, therefore, actively seek to create connections with new material culture, and discussions on agency now focus on relationality, networks, personhood, material agency (Latour 2005; Law and Hassard 1999) and the performance of things (Gosden and Marshall 1999) as the framework for social action within heterogeneous relationships or bodies of knowledge (Robb 2010, 502).

Central to the maintenance of group identities is trust and commitment to others within the group, which enables self-verification and enhances positive self perception, creating and reinforcing attachments to others (Burke and Stets 1999, 362). However, as a consequence, individual agency may be constrained within the group, as the cost of holding a sense of belonging potentially restricts a person's

ability to operate in the singular (Stets and Burke 2000, 227) and conflict will inevitably affect group dynamics on various levels. In this way, social restrictions may have dictated who was permitted to adopt incoming Roman objects and how these objects functioned within the recipient Iron Age communities of northern Britain.

Material culture and connections

Any discussion on material culture must logically include a brief survey of the concept of objectification as ‘a concern with objectification is simultaneously a concern with the nature of materiality itself’ (Tilley 2006, 60). Essentially, the objectification paradigm focuses on the role of objects in the social world and recognises that material forms are embedded within culture, society, groups and persons. At the heart of this perspective is the notion that people seek to create and objectify that which they experience around them and the environments of which they are a part (Tilley 2006). If, for Bourdieu (1977), identity and social practice are constructed by the repetition of actions performed within a specific cultural setting from a young age (i.e. *habitus*), objectification is the non-verbal means by which people embody and manipulate material to create, idealise, negotiate, transform and reinforce social concepts. Thus, objectification is the process by which things become or are regarded as socially meaningful (Shankar 2006, 298). Things are objectified throughout their life cycle, from their conception to their manufacture, consumption, and their transformation over time (Miller 2006) and the tracking of material biographies is informative on changing meanings ascribed to objects over time (Campbell 2012b, in press).

Objects which are the subject of exchange mechanisms, such as the *Kula* system of exchange where certain types of armbands, necklaces, shells or canoes travel in opposing directions between groups such as the Trobrianders (Malinowski 1922) and other societies from Papua New Guinea (Leach and Leach 1983), enable the participants to gain fame through inter-island contact. In this cultural context, value is driven by specific actions which inform upon and are informed by material culture. The objectification of objects is not restricted to commodities which might be deemed valuable within the monetary confines prevalent in Western societies, and can incorporate houses, tombs, rites of passage or pottery (Tilley 2006, 71). From this perspective, objects themselves have been defined as agents in their own right (Hoskins 2006, 74), with their own biographies, contexts of change and intentionality (Kopytoff 1986). Thus, ‘there is nothing without objectification. There are no pre-objectified forms’ (Miller 2005, 10). Cross-cultural similarities and differences in material or social practice should elucidate the rationale behind consumptive practices, behaviour, ideals and material expressions of identities (Rathje 1979, 2; Tilley 2006, 71).

These strands are the culmination of attempts to establish cohesive and informative interpretive frameworks for the study of objects. Leroi-Gourham’s (1993, 305, 319) concept of *chaînes opératoires*, whereby operational sequences form

the foundation of a society's technology and are manifested in material culture and space, can be helpfully applied. Here, choices for action are central to the processes and become apparent in artefactual variation and discontinuities (Lechtman 1977), alongside more repetitive actions following 'traditional' habitual technological traits, i.e. *habitus* (Bourdieu 1977). Such practices are thereafter passed on from one generation to the next or from artisan to apprentice (Dietler and Herbich 1998).

Roman material culture was introduced abruptly, at multiple levels and for restricted timescales in northern Britain. It is likely that the sporadic and short-lived character of its introduction would have precluded this material from becoming culturally embedded in the same way that it did in other parts of the Empire, and fewer opportunities existed for recipients to incorporate them into repetitive habitual practices, i.e. *habitus*. New strategies to negotiate the culturally acceptable use of these objects within the confines of societies receiving them would have been necessary. Van Dommelen's study (1998) recognises the meanings of colonial objects and that, whilst they are utilised by colonised communities, they are not necessarily used in the same way. For instance, a samian bowl may have been an acceptable vessel for food, but there may have been strict culturally imposed codes of conduct on the type of food contained within the bowl for provincial recipients. In other words, the social meaning of the object may lie in the fact that it is a bowl, not the vessel's origin as a 'Roman' bowl (Fincham 2001, 36). The processes by which agents acquire, use, modify then discard the object may also have a significant effect on its social meaning (Schiffer 1972; 1975; Rathje 1974; 1979).

Proportionalising enchained inalienable objects

The small number and fragmentary condition of Roman pot sherds on the vast majority of indigenous sites in Scotland is well documented (Curle 1932; Robertson 1970; Hartley 1972; Hunter 2001). However, even when a site has less than a handful of sherds, it is striking how these commonly derive from entirely different vessels (Campbell 2011). Therefore, the prevalent assumption that these artefacts are fragments of complete vessels once in use by local peoples or even, as Hunter (2009) has recently suggested, that coarse wares were of interest purely for their contents before the vessels themselves were discarded, can now be challenged. While it is entirely possible that excavation bias has impacted upon the retrieval of a selective number of sherds (Hodder 1999), the widespread occurrence of single or small numbers of Roman ceramics from non-Roman contexts requires explanation. It is suggested here that these vessel parts constitute an additional, deliberate, episode in the lifecycle of objects (Fig. 11.2).

Potential explanations of this phenomenon include the obvious possibility that objects were accidentally broken through use, although it is entirely possible that the broken fragments were thereafter subject to careful discard deposition (Rathje 1974). Objects may have been buried *because* they were damaged, such as ritually important

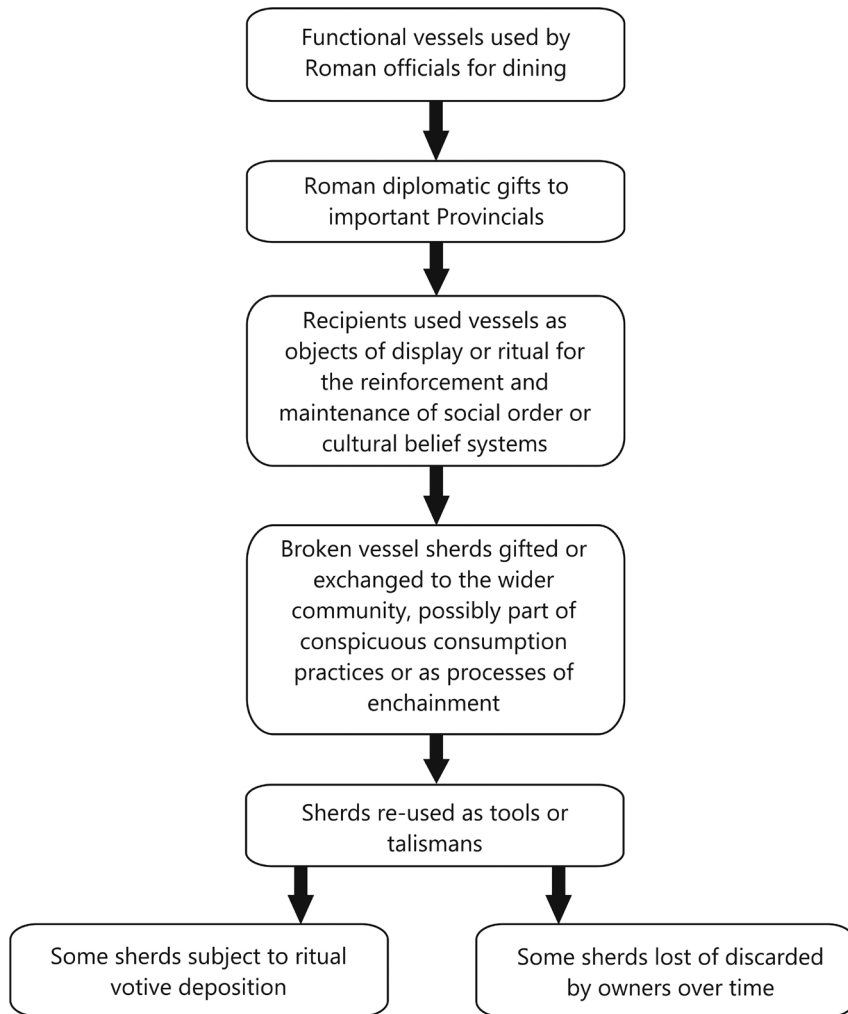


Fig. 11.2: Flow chart of Roman ceramic biographies in northern Britain (author's image).

artefacts that are broken but, because of their ritual association, cannot be returned either to daily use or subject to normal deposition practices (e.g. Garfinkel 1994). A reassessment of sherds within the framework of modern theoretical concepts recently applied to studies of fragmentary objects from Balkan Neolithic and Chalcolithic contexts (Chapman 2000; Chapman and Gardarska 2007) can lead to new, more interesting, possibilities. Potential explanations include: the ritual 'killing' of objects which are then deposited together, either fragmentarily or complete (e.g. Grinsell 1961; Jimenez 2007); the deliberate breakage of objects which are subsequently redistributed across a wide area and may have ritual associations (e.g. Bausch 1994); or the deliberate

breakage of objects which are subsequently used within practices of enchainment, then buried in widely-spread locations across a region (Chapman 2000, 27).

The concept of enchainment connects people to inalienable objects and imposes culturally specific restrictions on their use or discardment (Strathern 1988). Enchainment is inextricably linked to objectification, identity or multiple identities and dividualism, where links are formed and forged between people through the medium of material culture. The concept of *pars pro toto*, whereby object fragments are representative of the remainder of exchanged artefacts as well as the parties involved in the exchange, has been proposed as central to symbolic enchainment practices in prehistoric societies (Nitu 1969) and such customs can be traced back to Greek, Roman and medieval times (Chapman 2000, 36–38). Partial images were accepted as representative of the whole object in the Roman world. For instance, a bust or portrait head symbolises a person in their entirety (Barr-Sharrar 1987), a body part *ex voto* at a healing shrine denotes the diseased body of the dedicator seeking divine healing (van Straten 1981), and arms or armour hung on trophies in Roman art embodies defeated enemies (Ferris 2000; 2003). Thus fragmented bodies can symbolise deeply-held religious ideologies and a multiplicity of embodied meanings (Nochlin 1994) not necessarily obvious to modern observers, and a similar hypothesis could be proposed for parts of significant objects.

Objects cannot be fully understood by evaluating a single episode in their lifecycle (Kopytoff 1986). Their biographies are instead inextricably linked with people and structures through repetition and social transformation through time and movement (Gosden and Marshall 1999, 169). Objects can therefore be defined as ‘detached parts of people circulating through the social body in complex ways. People are not just multiple, they are also distributed’ (Gosden and Marshall 1999, 173). While the evidence for such practices appears to be limited for Roman Britain, it is possible that some objects, such as the bronze lower leg of a Roman statue, which has clearly been deliberately cut below the knee, recovered from deep drain cutting at Milsington in the Scottish Borders, represent evidence of *ex voto* dedications (Ferris 2003).

Objects of exchange are not merely manifestations of reciprocal acts, but rather they can facilitate a means by which gift recipients may retain certain elements of the ancestry and power of the gift-giver and perpetuate these aspects within themselves and their own descendants (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). This perspective relies upon personal relationships and knowledge between participants in the exchange; however, barter is a potentially significant element of the assimilation of foreign objects into existing autonomous local conditions where the object is locally ‘tamed’ and subsequently assumes a new phase in its life cycle (Thomas 1992). This may be particularly important in the context of incoming foreign objects deriving from oppressive colonial sources.

Thomas’ (1992, 29) study demonstrates the folly of assuming indigenous peoples were open to, or even welcoming of, foreign objects, even those that are perceived by the original owners as ‘exotic’ or ‘prestigious’. Notwithstanding occasional personal

ornamentation originating from the continent, which may have been in circulation in the pre-Roman period, such as a Langton Down type brooch from a probable 'warrior burial' at Merlsford, Fife (Hunter 1996, 120–22) and recent discovery of gold torcs from Stirlingshire, these societies were not overly reliant upon objects that were not locally produced. They need not therefore have viewed them as having any intrinsic value within their specific cultural setting. In this model, certain people could have acted as 'translators' in appropriating foreign objects into existing social conditions, thus they facilitated the cultural mechanisms which enabled the new, culturally acceptable phase in the artefact's lifecycle, potentially including physical, metaphysical, symbolic, conceptual and cosmological modifying practices (Campbell 2012b). In the processual approaches of the 1980s, they would be deemed to have been the 'elites' in hierarchical societies who controlled and restricted access to prestige goods for those further down the social strata (e.g. Macinnes 1984). But this presupposes the existence of modern hierarchical social structures, with an upper stratum that exercised power and control over those of lower status within ancient societies, a proposition which a more detailed analysis of the finds does not support (Campbell 2011).

Connections by enchainment and fragmentation are created through social practice, though this can be challenging to define in the archaeological record (Chapman and Gaydarska 2007, 203). The concept of fragmentation (Chapman 2000) offers potential for the reassessment of the small numbers and fragmentary condition of Roman ceramics from non-Roman contexts in northern Britain. However, more recent work caution against simplistic assumptions implied by the term, questioning how these processes function as conceptual frameworks in different societies (Brittain and Harris 2010, 590). Further, I would propose that the term fragmentation carries with it the implication of brokenness, dispersal, disconnection and separatism, which is entirely contradictory to the social and metaphysical ramifications associated with the physical dispersal of elements of a whole enchainment object.

If we are to accept that these elements constitute a symbolic manifestation of unity, connectedness, group identities, enchainment or commitment between people, then we might consider the application of a more suitable nomenclature for objects which can be determined as manifestations of this type of practice, as opposed to more naturally occurring breakage and deposition of things. This includes the identification of sherds from a single pot recovered from more than one location or the presence of single or small numbers of sherds originating from entirely different vessels. Decorated vessels could be subject to still further restriction insofar as specifically decorated parts could be attractive or particularly unattractive for certain groups (Groleau 2009). I would propose that the term 'proportionalising practices' offers a more accurate description and definition of this practice. Thus, objects, and parts thereof, can be seen as occupying a fundamental and integral role in the transmission, reinforcement and persistence of culturally significant information

within and between various societies, each portion having been equally imbued with multiplicities and complexities of meanings and memories.

Taking this a step further, one might suggest that the small dimensions of these portions could have enabled the participants to transport these cultural memories with them into alternative social contexts, physical locations or even passed on from generation to generation. Pots and pottery sherds have been perceived as objects imbued with social significance for millennia; indeed, there are several references to sherds in the Old Testament. Jeremiah is particularly fond of making remarks upon such objects, all of which imply pots embodying important links to their owners as well as being imbued with religious symbolism:

Is this man Coniah a despised, broken pot, a vessel no one cares for? Why are he and his children hurled and cast into a land that they do not know? (Jeremiah 22:28).

On all the housetops of Moab and in the squares there is nothing but lamentation, for I have broken Moab like a vessel for which no one cares, declares the LORD. (Jeremiah 48:38).

and its breaking is like that of a potter's vessel that is smashed so ruthlessly that among its fragments not a shard is found with which to take fire from the hearth, or to dip up water out of the cistern. (Isiah 30:14).

Proportionalising practices beyond the frontier

As mentioned in the introduction, Roman materials in northern Britain are most commonly found in small quantities within indigenous Iron Age sites, and Roman ceramic sherds found within individual sites rarely come from the same vessel. Such fragmentation has also been detected in other Roman materials in indigenous contexts (e.g. glass).

Potential examples of single samian sherds from various non-Roman contexts in northern Britain that might derive from the same vessel include a small sherd from close to the base of a Drag 37 bowl from Traprain Law hillfort in East Lothian (Fig. 11.3). This finds a parallel with a sherd from the Flavian fort at Elginhaugh (Hartley 2007, 287 and 391), one from Inchtuthil and another from the Camelon gutter group (Hartley 1985, 318 and 321). The decoration on these include a band of S-shaped gadroons commonly found on the wares of the Flavian potters Crucuro II, M. Crestio, Iustus, Frontinus, Severus and Pontus, all working out of the south Gaulish workshops at La Graufesenque (Mees 1995).

Other single sherds which stand out as atypical include the rim of a Drag 37 bowl from Traprain Law (Fig. 11.4) which has a row of 'X' shapes below an undecorated band, a most unusual decorative style and the only one of its type as yet known from a British site. The use of alternative motifs in lieu of ovolos are most common from the Trajanic potters of les Matres-de-Veyre, but this particular style is not recorded in the most comprehensive published accounts of Central Gaulish potters (Stanfield



Fig. 11.3: Decorated sherd of Drag 37 samian bowl from Traprain Law which corresponds with examples recovered from Elginhaugh, Inchtuthil and Camelon Roman forts (author's image).



Fig. 11.4: Rim sherd of a Drag 37 samian bowl from Traprain Law, East Lothian with band of 'xxx' in place of usual ovolos (author's image).

and Simpson 1958; Stanfield and Simpson 1990). After contacting numerous samian specialists, Joanna Bird has kindly tracked down the most likely source of this vessel, a workshop at Blickweiler, one of the earliest East Gaulish workshops exporting during the Antonine period (Knorr and Sprater 1927). Although the authors do not suggest a potter for this motif, parallel patterns are illustrated on Drag 37 bowls on Tafel 82, 50 and 12 (Knorr and Sprater 1927).

The widespread and fragmentary condition of Roman non-ceramic material across northern Britain is equally intriguing (Fig. 11.5). Price (1997, 295) recognises the cultural significance and lengthy lifecycle of glass bracelet fragments manufactured from reused Roman glass and states that ‘their precise dates are not significant . . . as they are likely to have been carried...as fragments, long after their production had ceased.’ These fragments were clearly deemed to have been sufficiently significant as to be circulating for several centuries after their initial period of use, possibly as talismans or keepsakes, as they are occasionally found in Anglo-Saxon burials (Sherlock and Welsh 1992, 152; Eckardt and Williams 2003) in common with samian vessels (Cool 2004). This practice of curation and later deposition of glass fragments has also been apparent for Roman sherds such as those found at Hallow Hill, Fife (Proudfoot 1996) and Whithorn, Dumfries and Galloway (Hill 1997). Traders could have collected glass fragments for recycling (Keller 2005) and redistribution across the northern landscape, and it is not unreasonable to propose a similar practice of social reconstitution for pottery sherds, particularly samian, though the issue of Roman ceramic reuse has only been previously systematically addressed for amphorae (Pena 2007). The incorporation of single samian sherds within graves at Whithorn (Hill 1997), Hallow Hill (Proudfoot 1996, 414) and other Roman objects from funerary contexts may support this hypothesis (Maldonado 2011).

The deposition of Roman material culture fragments in early medieval funerary contexts might constitute an element of early Christian sanctifying practices. Other sites, such as the Clava-cairn at Stoneyburn (Simpson 1969, 74), a cist at Airlie School in Angus (Davidson 1886) and a burial cairn at Cairnhill in Aberdeenshire (Curle 1932, 295) constitute the deliberate non-contemporaneous placement of Roman material within ancient burial structures dating to the Neolithic period or Bronze Age. This is challenging to explain, though it may be interpreted as early pilgrims spreading Christian religious practices and consecrating the remains of people known to have been previously buried in a non-Christian manner. This may have been a method of Christianising the deceased or providing them with posthumous Last Rites to enable their souls to progress to Heaven according to Christian beliefs, in the same way that St Columba and other saints sanctified places they perceived as poisonous but worshipped ‘as a divinity [by] heathen people [Picts]’ (Adomnán 625–704 [1875, 73–74]).

There is also a marked preference for samian fragments on sites where craft activities, including metalworking, were being undertaken, and it is possible that such practices could have been ascribed ideological significance (Hingley 1997). Many of these sherds were subject to physical reuse, perhaps as colourants, abrasives

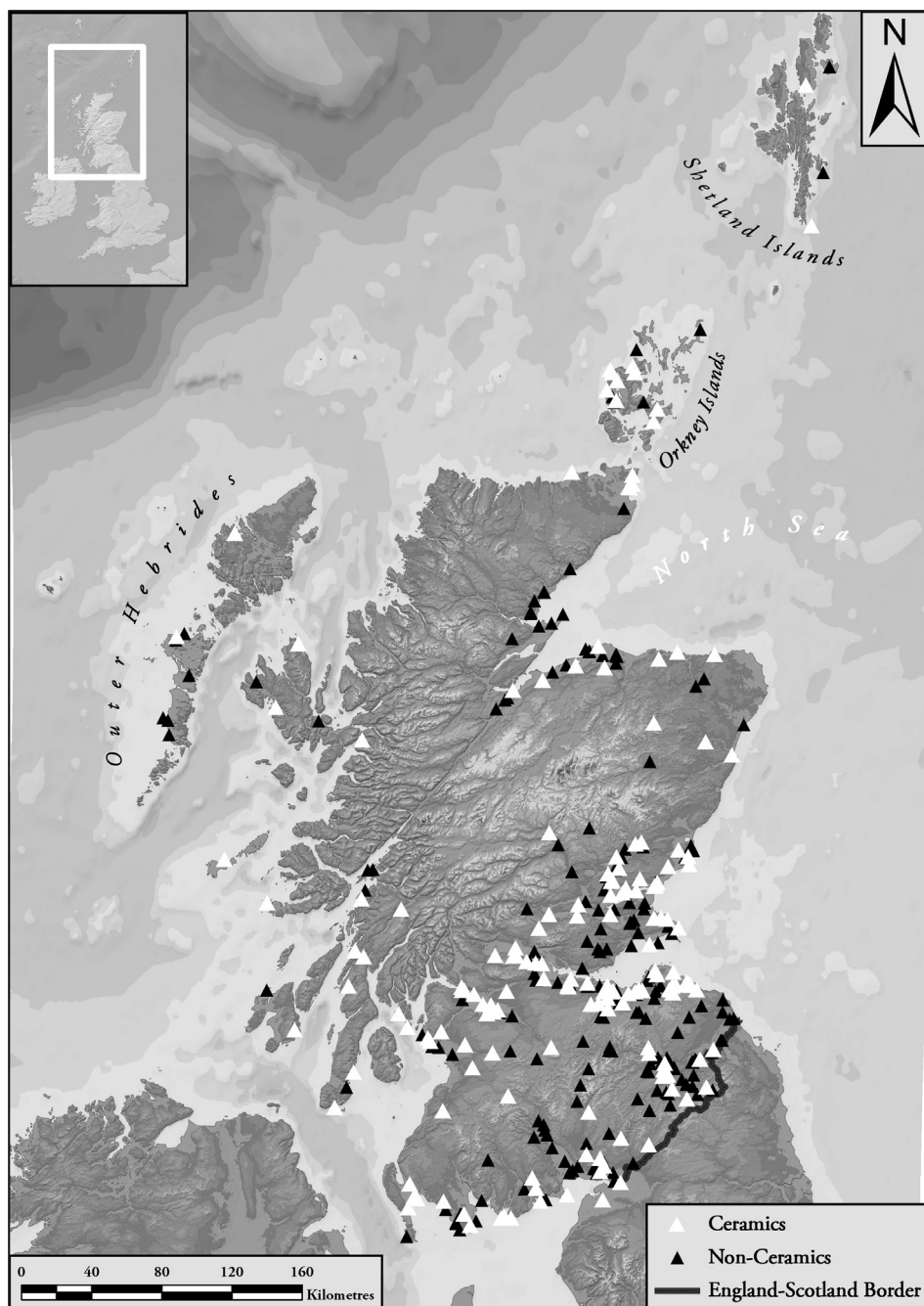


Fig. 11.5: Map of northern Britain, showing the location of Iron Age sites with Roman materials (map by Ryan McNutt).

or polishers in metalworking activities (Campbell 2012b). Samian sherds recovered from closure deposits of Scottish brochs and souterrains (Campbell 2011, 198–205) potentially constitute a metaphysical reconceptualisation of Roman materials as votive offerings (Turner, in prep), signifying ritual practices associated with a ‘rite of termination’ (Merrifield 1987) at the end of the structures’ lifecycles. The deliberate placement of Roman ceramic sherds, glass fragments and other material is evident during the construction and closure of some lowland brochs. These include their potential deliberate placement prior to the fire that destroyed Fairy Knowe, Stirlingshire (Main 1998, 310), from the wall filling possibly post-dating the broch at Hurly Hawkin, Angus (1982) and sealed pits in the interior of Torwoodlee in the Scottish Borders (Piggott 1951, 96–102). Such practices are also apparent in Orcadian brochs, where single samian sherds have been recovered from destruction deposits such as the main entrance rubble layer at Howe of Howe (Ballin Smith 1994, 250), the wall debris at Knowe of Taft (Watt 1882, 450) and two samian sherds from the gallery entrance at Rousay Midhowe (Hedges 1987, 116).

The deliberate deposition of Roman ceramic portions at key phases in the lifecycle of lowland brochs may confirm that these fragments were integral to the construction and negotiation of identities, social memories and materiality associated with monumental architecture (Campbell, in prep. b). This further suggests the significance of exotic things in marking pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal phases in monument biographies. The use of traditional and newly acquired foreign objects in such practices implies certain Roman artefacts were being culturally redefined and reused in a manner perceived as culturally relevant, perhaps coupled with oral accounts of object trajectories from the perception of the recipient communities, potentially continued over many generations.

Conclusion

Many Iron Age communities in northern Britain maintained their traditional practices both during and after the ‘brief interludes’ (Hanson 2003) of Roman presence. However, they retained some elements of their interactions with the Romans that were perceived as beneficial. One strategy that may have been employed to negotiate the Iron Age and Roman interface was the selective adoption of Roman material culture (Campbell 2011). Some of these things, including pottery and glass, were then physically, symbolically and conceptually redefined, perhaps to make them socially acceptable for appropriation into new cultural conditions. Because these foreign objects were introduced abruptly and at multiple levels, such negotiations are likely to have had a similarly transformative effect on the recipient communities. These can thereafter be defined as hybrid products – no longer fully Roman or traditionally Iron Age, but rather the manifestation of a cultural collage in the forming of an entirely new thing (Campbell 2012b). Objects absorb meanings through use, and hybrid objects necessarily require the formulation of a new set of (re)negotiating practices to facilitate their local integration.

The selective adoption of Roman material culture by some societies cannot necessarily be interpreted as the Romanisation of the recipients, nor must regionally variable patterns of selective adoption signify resistance to the process (Jimenez 2007, 25). The manner in which the objects were used is equally crucial to our understanding of their cultural significance to recipient groups or agents as well as the subject of group or self-definition. Objects absorb variable meanings as a result of the manner in which they are used and 'that which is significant about the adoption of alien objects – as of alien ideas – is not the fact that they are adopted, but the way they are culturally redefined and put to use' (Kopytoff 1986, 67). The creative manipulation of Roman things in traditional activities, including hybrid practices, may have enabled people to join ancestral memories with new experiences within the Roman world (Jimenez 2007, 26), or could have been used to construct new hybrid identities. There may also have been deliberate overt or covert resistance, or even unconscious evasion to the imposition of new Roman cultural values or material culture, particularly in northern Britain where the Roman presence was sporadic and short-lived (Hingley 2005, 70). It is possible that the recipients manipulated the material of Empire in a culturally appropriate manner as a means of symbolically absorbing the oppressive power of Rome.

This research has considered potential forms of active and conservative resistance to determine that, within a northern British context, resistance might be better explained as a nuance of persistence. From this perspective, traditional, foreign and hybrid objects, even in fragmented condition, may have been utilised by indigenous communities to facilitate the persistence of certain aspects of cultural identities, or the renegotiation of hybrid identities within constantly changing socio-economic-political conditions through the creative physical and metaphysical manipulation of Roman objects, or parts thereof.

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Chapter 12

Afterword: Identity ... and Things

A. Bernard Knapp

*(Archaeology, School of Humanities, University of Glasgow,
Glasgow G12 8QQ, Scotland, bernard.knapp@glasgow.ac.uk)*

Keywords: *identity, affordance*

In their thoughtful and incisive introduction to this volume, Maldonado and Russell observe first that the relationship between material culture and (past) identities is not just an enduring aspect of archaeology but one that is notoriously difficult to disentangle, analyse and understand. They suggest, secondly, that studying material culture increasingly revolves around issues of memory, experience and affect, and that focusing on these factors represents the emergence of new ways of conceptualising identity – i.e. by prioritising materials and material culture. Consequently, this means that archaeologists today are ‘... not seeking static or monolithic identities, but the conditions in which those came to have meaning’. By now, we are all aware that identities are created, negotiated, challenged, combined and invented or re-invented as the situation demands, and seldom does a month pass without the appearance of yet another new journal or monograph on the topic (e.g. Scott 2015).

The introduction also deconstructs notions of identity, and self-critiques the papers in the volume to the extent that little is left for a commentator to add. They define ‘identity’ and encapsulate its history; they consider the ‘identity crisis’ and point out that identity is increasingly seen as an emerging property of living in and creating a material world (materialising identity); they establish and discuss what they see as three ‘waves’ of identity theory; and to varying extents they point out the themes that unify the papers (e.g., the ‘push-pull’ of identity formation and the emphasis on sameness and difference (inclusion or exclusion); the notion that identity is a way of understanding the world, one that emerges repeatedly from the network of relations between humans, materials and ideas as well as the factors that distinguish them (e.g., the diverse social, spatial and temporal aspects of these networked relations).

Finally, they observe how the papers examine identity as emerging from intersecting variables such as ideology and cosmology, power relations and economic production, nationalism and ethnicity, and the relationship between materials and things.

The individual papers are not limited solely to assessing identity; indeed they pack a veritable arsenal of theoretical and/or methodological frameworks (some all at once) in attempting to understand identity formation: agency; creolisation and hybridization practices; materiality, object biography and symmetrical archaeology; objectification, fragmentation and enchainment; performance; the *chaîne opératoire*; taskscape, personhood and 'assemblage'; migration and colonisation; gender and mortuary practices; and Deleuzian concepts of habit and memory (but not identity).

Regarding the last, Wright states that he will present 'a theoretical bricolage of symmetrical and interpretive approaches' in the attempt to see what the lithic assemblages of Mesolithic west-central Scotland might tell us about identity and group identities. In discussing 'philosophy and archaeology', Wright notes that 'there is a fine line between challenging and losing the reader': indeed, this paper requires very close reading if you don't want to get lost. Wright tends to emphasize the Deleuzian notion that there is no identity, but if there is, it is about transformations, what he terms 'negotiation and renegotiation at the intersections of the cross-cutting rhizomatic *chaînes opératoires* that form the relational continuum'. For Deleuze, 'identity' (if there is such) has no primacy over difference; well, then, is identity 'difference'? Wright explains, sort of: '... the "identity" of either a person or thing is not because they have a different "identity" to other people or things, it is difference as becoming different that creates singularities'. Although Wright claims that he wants to avoid Miller's (2010, 79–80) dictum that '[a]cademics tempted by the promise of an easy and assured claim to cleverness, create vast circulations of obscure and impressive citations', I fear he has rather fallen victim to it.

Other papers in the volume take a more straightforward, or at least tried-and-tested view of 'difference', namely that identities emerge, are negotiated and change as people seek to distinguish themselves from others, whether in terms of gender, mortuary practices, food and drink, or with respect to in-migrating or colonising or imperial groups, or both (Campbell, Hayne, McGuire, Marín Aguilera, Russell). Pierce takes an alternative view and argues that the Norse living in the North Atlantic during the post-Viking era (c. AD 1150–1450) sought to demonstrate their *inclusion* in a wider European, particularly Christian, identity through their dress, ecclesiastical architecture and other social (religious) and material (pottery) practices.

Russell's paper stands out amongst this group, if nothing else for its clarity of argument. He examines the impact of culture contact and connectivity to collective identity in the case of increased east Mediterranean contacts with Middle and Late Bronze Age Sicily (from c. 1450 BC onward). For Russell, difference means an 'intentional decision to create or promote material expressions that are distinct, either from the raw or intentionally adapted, to appear different from one's neighbours as an expression of unique group identity', comparing this to Robb (2001, 181) who sees difference 'as

the product of active social choices'. Russell suggests that those scholars who accept the notion of Aegean contacts with and impact upon the material expression of Bronze Age Sicilian identity tend to focus on the novel aspects, be they imports or influences. By contrast, Russell looks at the ways local Sicilian communities *consumed* these objects and influences. He suggests that what was maintained of local material practices and what was actively rejected from external practices were just as crucial to the formation of a distinct Sicilian identity as any external influences. In other words, contact with the exotic ideas and practices of Aegean or eastern Mediterranean people *afforded* to Sicilians some notions of how their own identity might be constituted and distinguished from those of the outside world (see further below on 'afforded').

Russell also maintains that '[o]bjects can be acculturated much more expediently than people' and adds that '[t]he experience of consuming an imported item could itself be an inspirational agent for incorporating new features into Sicilian material culture'. Although this statement was not followed up in any detail, it nonetheless gives me a lead-in to critiquing some other papers in more detail, papers that use distinct terminologies but thread their discussions through and around the 'material turn' in archaeology.

In a wide range of recent archaeological research that focuses on the inescapable 'entanglement' of subjects and objects, of mind and matter (e.g. Hodder 2012), 'things', like people, are seen to have 'active' social lives, even biographies (e.g. Gosden and Marshall 1999). Whilst Joy (2009, 540–45) traced several archaeological applications of object biographies, Tilley had earlier argued that '... if things have their own biographies, it is but a short step to consider these things as having their own agency and actively having *effects* in relation to persons' (Tilley 2006, 10, original emphasis). Such 'effects' might better be seen as 'affordances' (after Gibson 1977), which refers to an object's potential as defined by its (relational) material properties.

For example, Knappett (2011, 63) observes that a door may 'afford' an opening to many people, but not to a child who cannot reach its handle. Keane (2014, S315–S316) exemplifies affordance with a wooden chair, which may afford sitting but also might be used as a stepladder, a paperweight, a hat hook or ultimately as firewood. Crucially, the notion of affordance is indeterminate, relational, not unlike identity itself. The material features of the chair afford its use for sitting, standing or hanging your hat, but it is a human agent who decides which feature s/he wants, and for what purpose. Keane's essay is actually concerned with Eastern Orthodox icons, which have all the characteristics we associate with materials, or material objects: shape, size, weight and solidity. He stresses (Keane 2014, S317):

As a physical thing, the icon also has at least the potential for being recognized as possessing a self-identity that distinguishes it from other icons, no matter how much they may resemble one another or derive from the same divine prototype. The material properties of the icons and all that surrounds them, including the places in which they are to be found and the actions people perform toward and with them, serve as affordances for further actions and reflections on them.

None of the papers in this volume pick up on the concept of ‘affordances’ *per se*, but in line with the ‘material turn’, some authors approach material culture as an active agent in the formation and transformation of identity, not simply something (‘some thing’) that ‘reflects’ identity. Creese dances around this issue, examining how ‘subjectivities’ may emerge in practices of identity formation; he explains clearly the differences between what he terms *representational* (i.e. agentive, or humanist) and *relational-affective* (i.e. symmetrical, ‘meshworked’) identities. Creese also points out how the *relational-affective* approach has a tendency to ‘obviate the human subject altogether by dissolving all commonsense distinctions between mind and matter, human and non-human actors within an infinite relational “meshwork” ... the anarchy of pure symmetrical agency’, which many archaeologists find difficult to embrace. Creese maintains that the relational-affective ‘conditioning’ of the Iroquoian subject by effigy pipes and tobacco ‘reified’ certain kinds of institutionalized identity; in other words, they involved both modes of identification, representational and relational-affective, that *afforded* the institutionalisation of a particular view of the self, and tended toward different historical constructions of the self.

Maldonado is more forthright, arguing that the long cist burials of northern Britain were spaces prepared to embrace the body and related materials. Thus burial practices should be related not just to human actions but also to questions concerning changing notions of personhood, the body and its materiality. He questions the modernist division between ‘material culture’ and ‘raw materials’ (following Ingold 2012; Webmoor and Witmore 2008), and along with others suggests that grave gifts might be seen as ‘objects of memory’, with social biographies identifiable through their circulation amongst the living prior to their deposition in graves. For example, the incorporation of older, re-used stones (Roman and Pictish) with their own biographies suggests that stone linings served as furnishings, just as grave goods did. These stone linings, even the preparation of the ground to hold them, might be seen as part of the material practice of death, as the necessary materials — stone, timber — should be seen as comparable to the more esoteric furnishings that were used in Anglo-Saxon burials. Thus, in Maldonado’s view, such furnishings served as active participants in, rather than just the backdrop to, mortuary practices. Long cists, then, should not be seen as markers of some group identity (Angles, Britons, Picts or Scots), nor as the material bases of ‘historical narratives’ positing Christian conversion, Romanisation or ‘Celtic’ vs ‘Germanic’ identities. Interpreting stone linings as an active form of mortuary furnishing suggests instead that these graves *afforded* to those who built them the opportunity to (1) protect the dead from outside elements (‘out-closure’) and seal off the dead to protect the living (‘in-closure’), (2) embody their ancestors and materialise the afterlife, and (3) negotiate personhood (and identity) rather than substantiate it.

Harris offers the most lucid and detailed account in this strand of papers, pinpointing and elaborating on what stands out as a key issue for assessing identity in archaeology: how do we square the material turn in archaeology – i.e. thing theory, materiality and material agency, symmetrical archaeology, etc. – with the

essentialist, humanistic, agentic or 'social' concept of identity? How might we change our perspective from one embedded in the opposition of people and ideas versus materials and material things, to one that embraces and explores their mutual emergence, their common 'agency'? Harris's answer (and in part, Creese's) is to draw upon the Deleuzian concept of 'assemblage', what he defines as gatherings of multi-scalar lines of relations through which entities emerge, and to approach identity as a 'becoming', an ongoing outcome of relationships that constitute everything from things and minerals to people and places. Thus he states: 'Identity is about how human beings and things are assembled and emergent together in the material world, not to the point of [a] finished article, but as an ongoing process of growth and becoming'.

Harris exemplifies his argument with a brief discussion of a rich Beaker burial ('Amesbury Archer') from the third millennium BC (Fitzpatrick 2011), found in Wiltshire, UK, whose grave goods included over 100 worked flints, and in particular 17 barbed and tanged arrowheads. Briefly put, he maintains that the arrowheads and the body of the deceased reveal a 'performance of archery', as well as the ability to hunt, wound and kill. In Harris's view, the metal items and related grave goods do not simply *represent* status but instead help to *create* it: this purportedly goes beyond simply ascribing an identity based on the male warrior hunter, instead demonstrating the role of material things in *affording* to the archer the ability to act in certain ways and thus to elicit a certain identity.

Although Harris cautions that this is only a preliminary step and a 'thumbnail' example toward engaging identity in a 'post-humanist' archaeology, it is nonetheless at once encouraging and disappointing. Encouraging because we need to recognise that archaeology must focus not just on people but on the material world that surrounds and often drives them; disappointing because archaeological encounters with materiality (or, with Harris, the 'ontological turn') remain few and their interpretations difficult to sustain. Like most similar studies, instead of taking archaeological examples, Harris talks a lot about cups of coffee, institutional organisations, books in an academic's office, Melanesian pigs, and the 2003 blackout in eastern North America.

But this is unfair and any negativity implied stems from my own concerns about the usefulness of approaches that all too blindly embrace material or object agency. All too often, it seems that 'the way things are' depends on who is examining them, what they are seeking to prove, and with which trends in social theory they seek to align themselves. Instead, we need to cultivate and amplify the chaff of materiality within the wheat of archaeological materials and material practices. We need to consider very carefully if, and to what extent, such a thing-oriented approach may enhance or impoverish our understanding of human activity in the past, and our attempts to reconstruct or explain it.

All the papers in this volume seek to demonstrate, each in their own distinctive way, that identity is an emergent property of living in and creating material worlds, one that must be examined, deconstructed and refined by prioritising materials and material culture. Harris's thought-provoking assessment of identity in archaeology

has potentially far-reaching consequences, and thus in my view represents the key study in this volume. Archaeologists need to develop much more explicitly their philosophical ruminations about how the complex mix of humans, things, animals, plants etc. that we deem 'social' might instead be seen as assemblages (gatherings) that involve identity, recognising that they are seldom initiated by people alone or constructed solely through representation.

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